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GORDON COVENTRY'S
LIFE STORY.

BOOK No. 8.

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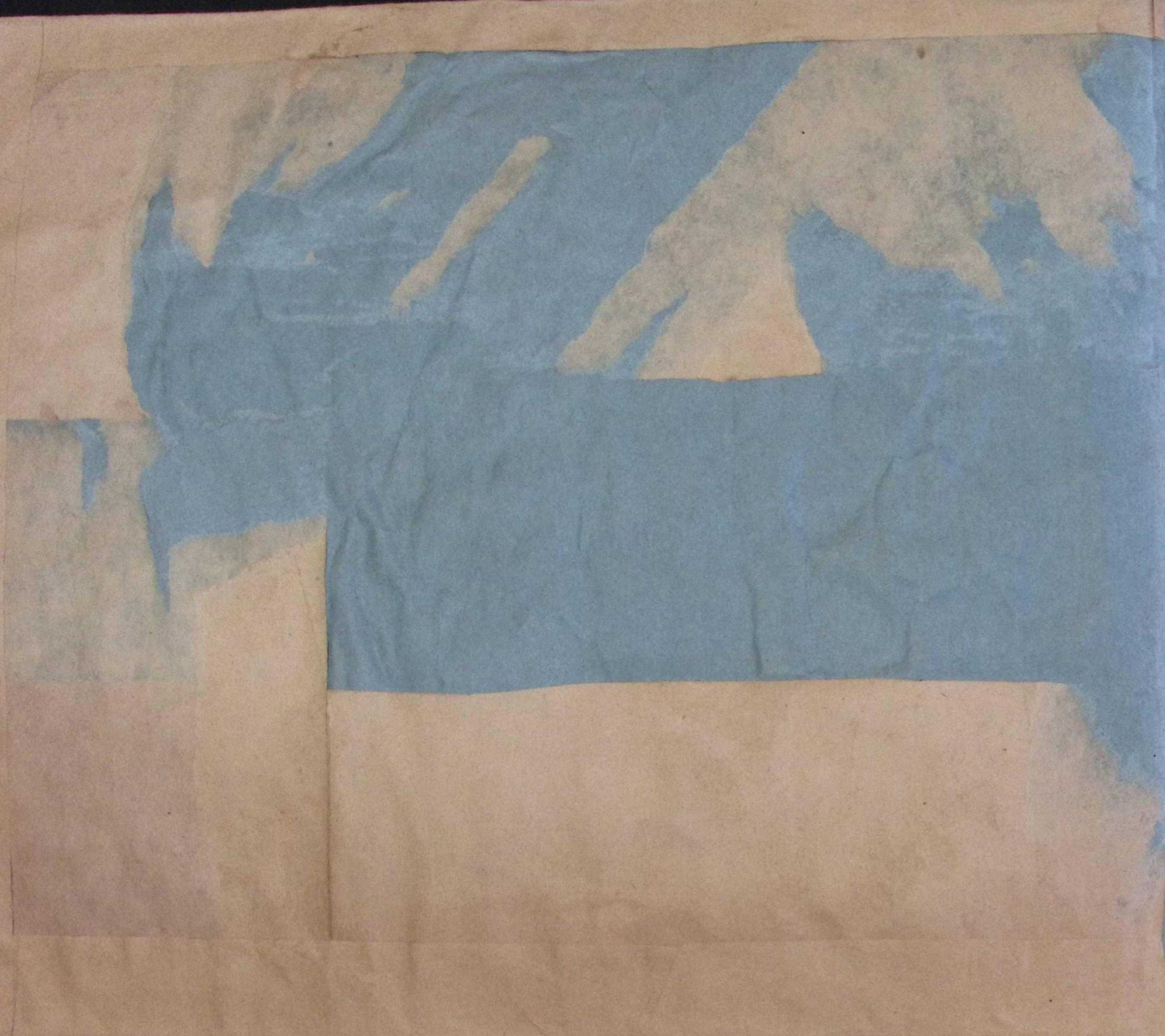
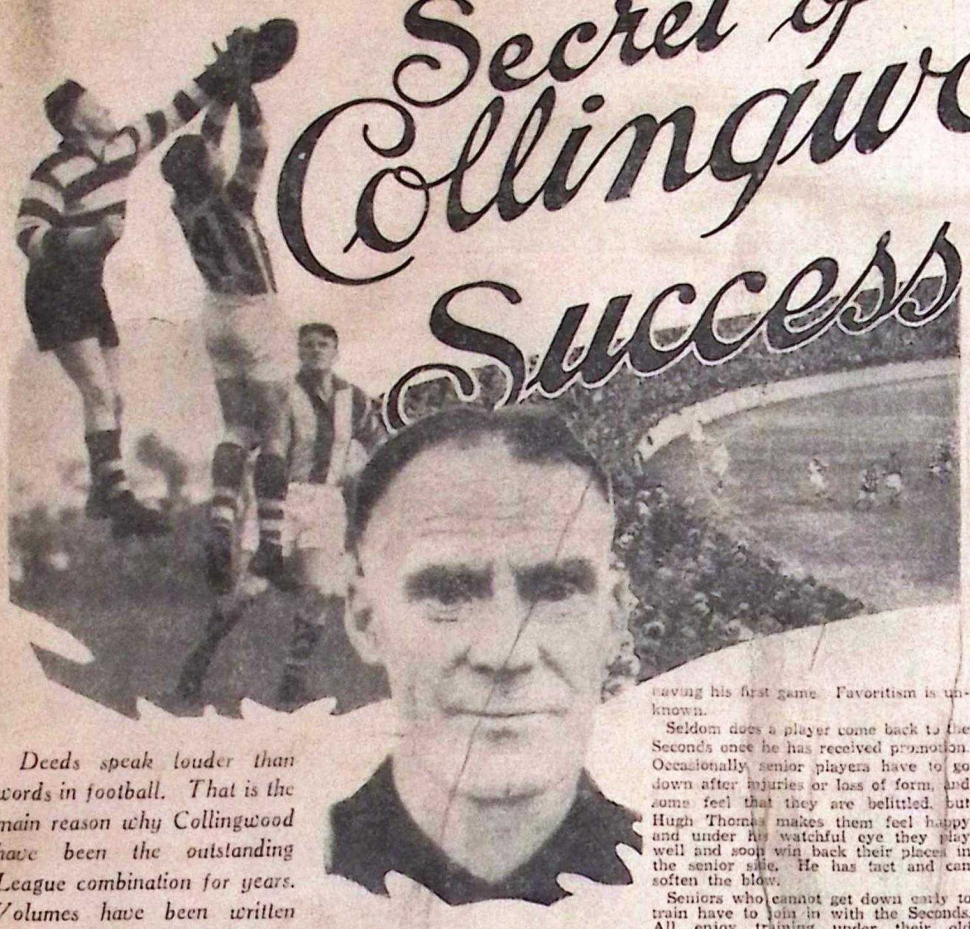


Gordon Coventry Discloses

Secret of Collingwood's Success



By GORDON COVENTRY, as told to J. M. Rohan

Deeds speak louder than words in football. That is the main reason why Collingwood have been the outstanding League combination for years. Volumes have been written about the many premierships they have won, and the prominent position they have held in football for over 40 years. There must be some reason for the Magpies, continued success.

Much has been said about the strict discipline and good management of the club, but other factors are necessary to maintain for so long a combination of match winners. In this story Gordon Coventry takes us behind the scenes at Collingwood.

Who could be able to tell the secrets of the Collingwood team's success better than the most famous player the club has known?

THE success of Collingwood since they joined up as one of the foundation clubs of the League has been nothing short of phenomenal. So many premiership pennants have been won that difficulty is experienced in showing them off to advantage. Thousands ask what is the secret of Collingwood's success over the other clubs of the League. I have heard the question many times but haven't always heard an answer given.

Whenever it was put to me I could answer it without hesitation.

Hugh Thomas, coach of Collingwood seconds.

Collingwood's greatness in my time can be attributed to three factors:—

(1) The coaching of the second eighteen by Hugh Thomas;

(2) The remarkably long service the club has had from quite a number of players;

(3) Intelligent captaining throughout.

You have heard of the strict discipline at Collingwood. To me it was mythical. Good players, with a thorough grounding in the ethics of football, take pride in the part they play in bringing victory to a club. It is only in isolated cases that their behavior would be anything but exemplary.

Players of my time have been so keen to retain their places in the side that no disciplinary measures have been required.

Good Grounding In Seconds

Now let me tell why the team has been free from that element that calls for reprimand, rebuke or punishment. For the 18 years I played for Collingwood it would be safe to say that two-thirds of the team had passed through the ranks of the Magpie second eighteen. To serve an apprenticeship in that club under Hughie Thomas, the coach, was to have the hall-mark placed on you as a footballer.

Thomas taught and still teaches, young fellows how to look after themselves on the football field and off it.

"You play better football in any company if you feel that you hold the respect of officials," was one of the maxims he laid down. Most of his pupils remembered those words and profited by them.

There was not a man promoted to the senior side who was not anxious to make good for Hugh's sake.

So blind was their faith in him that Thomas only needed to express a wish that they run into a brick wall and they would have attempted it just to please him.

It goes without saying that Thomas has been a factor in Collingwood's success. Committees can come and go at Collingwood, but as long as Hugh Thomas has charge of the seconds the senior side will be a force to be reckoned with in the League. In my opinion he has not received the recognition he deserves.

Hugh Thomas's enthusiasm for football does not end with the worries of Collingwood second eighteen. He umpires the schoolboy curtain-raisers at Victoria Park and then dashes off to the ground on which the young Magpies are playing.

While umpiring he coaches, telling the youngsters their mistakes as they make them. His success as a coach is pronounced, and it comes about through his knowing the game and being able to make every lad feel that he is their friend.

Demands Keenness And Determination

Thomas demands keenness and determination from his players. If they can't develop those qualities he will not waste his time on them.

The stars of the Seconds at Collingwood are treated the same as the lad having his first game. Favoritism is unknown.

Seldom does a player come back to the Seconds once he has received promotion. Occasionally senior players have to go down after injuries or loss of form, and some feel that they are belittled, but Hugh Thomas makes them feel happy and under his watchful eye they play well and soon win back their places in the senior side. He has tact and can soften the blow.

Seniors who cannot get down early to train have to join in with the Seconds. All enjoy training under their old master.

Thirteen or 14 of Collingwood's present-day team graduated from the Seconds. It has been that way since I joined the club.

I envied the nippers coming up into the Collingwood team. They had ability and assurance, and it took me back to my early days when I knew nothing about the finer points of the game and had to pick up knowledge through watching older players. I regretted that I did not have a season or two under the man who has kept Collingwood in the forefront for over 20 years.

The remarkable thing about Thomas's pupils is that they take their places in the senior side, knowing how to do the right thing to team in with the men about them. He has them schooled in the peculiarities of key position men, and the seniors never find a junior cramping their style.

The spadework done by Thomas eliminates any chance of a boy getting a swollen head, and all are taught to take success modestly.

Magpies with ten years' experience are often heard to criticise mistakes of opponents and to add: "What would Hugh say if he saw a man do that?"

The work of the Collingwood selec[tor] has been comparatively easy for [the] simple reason that Thomas has had [to] hand a continuous supply of [good] players. So much for H[ugh] could write volumes about [his] ful work for Collingwood.

Of course his good work would [be] wasted if Jock McHale did not carry out his part at Collingwood. Everybody knows how McHale has handled the Magpies in his long association as coach —over 20 years. The club has been fortunate in having men of their ability to handle the material available.

Jock McHale's fiery addresses at half-time were always sufficient to let players know that it was a League match and not a Sunday school picnic.

Chopping & Changing No Good

Clubs that find it necessary to chop and change their teams about have little chance of success. In this regard Collingwood have been extremely lucky. The long service of a number of players has been a factor in their continued success.

For years the side picked itself. Even at the commencement of a season it was seldom necessary to take in more than one new player. For match after match the same 18 has taken the field.

With other clubs it is invariably found that 150 players are seeking inclusion at the practice periods; but 70, or at the outside 80, would be the limit at Collingwood. I can't recall the side ever taking in more than three new players to commence a season.

More players have been presented with 10-year service certificates by Collingwood than by any other club. A great factor this from a match-winning point of view.

Collingwood notched many premiership points by having an experienced team in the field for the opening game. Points on the list early ensured them a place in the four even if they struck a mid-season slump.

There is one way to long life in football and that is to avoid trouble. Bumps hurt the doner just as often as they rattle the recipient. I never bumped unless it was necessary.

To discuss the captaincy of Collingwood in the last 13 or 14 years would be embarrassing. Everyone knows my brother Syd. was in charge for years and that he was honored by being made captain of many Victorian League teams in interstate and carnival games, in most of which Victoria was successful. And Syd. had pleasure in knowing that his old team would not lack a leader when he moved on.

Harry Collier was on hand. Collier was well fitted to take over, and he justified himself by leading his side to victory in the 1935 and 1936 premierships. Syd and Harry Collier were two great captains.

Any League club that is blessed with a good coach in the Seconds, combined with having the luck to get long service out of their champions, can hope for success. If luck goes further, and they have men in their midst who are born to lead, then greater success is theirs.

Having said so much about the three main factors in Collingwood's success, and having left it so late before mentioning the names of some great men behind the scenes at Collingwood, it may be thought that I had forgotten those responsible for the wonderful atmosphere that prevailed.

Players Must Be Contented

To ensure success there must be a bond of understanding between players and officials. Discontented players are not usually good match winners. And

...wood stalwart.

...the committee ...e Copeland, Jack ...yd Sherrin, Wa... few others, and ...ears, has ensured harmony. ...saw that the players wanted ... to make them happy, and their int... about the club rooms was desirable.

They were great sports. It's a pity they have to grow old, as it is hard to get men with such a broad outlook to take their place.

The grand old men mentioned placed the game first. They gave their lives to football, the club being second to the game all the time. How different it is today.

Old players dropped out years ago and still maintained active interest in the club, but that is not so today. In my opinion the old player element is one that every club should encourage. I well remember how I looked up with reverence to the champions in the side when I first joined Collingwood. They inspired me, and I don't think the youth of today has changed one iota.

Big Men Helped The Small

There were set rules at Collingwood that all had to observe. For a start there was no room for the individualist. All had to play their part as cogs in the wheel and there was no favoritism.

Shepherding was a feature, and it was an understood thing that the big men had to help the midgets.

Selectors never queried the play of a pocket forward even though he didn't get a kick. As long as he held the attention of an opponent, and kept him out on the boundary line, he pleased selectors. No rule was set down for back men other than that they had to shadow opposing forwards.

Get the ball and pass it to a comrade was the order of the day, but wild, indiscriminate kicking was a short cut to getting dropped from the side. The man who did not keep his position was similarly treated.

I would like to see my old team maintain its position as one of the foremost League clubs. I was proud to be a member of the team for so long. Everyone connected with the club treated me like a toff.

Next Week: Those Busy Little Rovers.

HUGH THOMAS has a few words with his "pupils."

AS I SEE THE GAME

By ROD McGREGOR

Football scoring has gone berserk, and the tale of scoring tries and the actual points scored in Saturday's matches makes one wonder whether some of the recent cricket scores have not crept in by mistake.

This is not due to improved scoring methods, but because the majority of defenders show neither quality in play nor a knowledge of the proper principles of defence.

IN the matter of sound defence football has slipped badly. Either the present-day players are far below the quality of their predecessors, or else they are not properly instructed in what defence means.

The fact that in half the matches both winners and losers scored 100 points or better at an average of 2½ points for every minute's play, is a serious reflection both on defenders and their instructors. It creates a feeling of doubt as to whether the defenders in these teams were doing any more than go through the motions of performing a fair day's work.

The certainty of victory is not founded on hit and run methods and haphazard dashes in defence. With the advantage of the run to the ball, a defender has to get many more kicks than his opponent to break even. Besides clearing the ball away he has to "muzzle" his forward and kill his game to such an extent as to make him a negligible factor in scoring.

I am of the opinion that in football today we have any number of players who have enough pace and ability to do the job well; but the fact that very often the value of a defender's play is assessed on the kicks he gets creates a false idea.

Actually worse football produces greater scores. This anomaly is almost entirely due to inflated values and the lack of proper instruction.

A Dose of Medicine

I WONDER in how many clubs the Coach takes the defenders aside and says, "It's your turn to take the medicine? We'll give you a night all to yourselves and concentrate on the proper methods of defence. We'll teach you the value of an unbroken line that can advance and rereat as circumstances demand, and in which each individual is his opponent's shadow."

Talks to different sections of the team would have a far greater value if taken separately than if merely included in a general discussion.

Old horses are hard to cure, but there is something that may interest the younger brigade. The chief fault I have noticed is that so many back men do not take up the right position for a start. They do not concentrate on defending from the "inside" and forcing the forward flankers into bad positions. Any defender who gives his forward the inside running is sacrificing half his advantage.

The inside position is particularly important in backing up the centre half-back and the full back. If a defender has to go to his comrade's assistance over the body of an opponent he will probably arrive in time to see the flags waved. A shrewd forward will undoubtedly spar for position, but I have seen backs concede the position, and have come to the conclusion that they do not know any better. Instruction is what is wanted, and if defenders are properly taught lots of inflated scores will disappear, and we'll be back on the gold standard in no time.

Tigers Have a Long Tail

ON alternate Saturdays, Richmond has shown itself as one of the mixed possibilities for the 1938 premiership. In some respects the team is quite the equal of anything the game can produce, but the falling off is too sharp to permit a prediction with any degree of certainty. At present their tail is too long.

Richmond's main strength is its big guns, backed by a sound defence. The followers are more competent than most, and are a scoring asset when in a place. The line of approach through the rucks to goal is quite sound, but from the centre onwards the team is rather ragged at the edges.

To lose by 10 points in a match of equal shots was by no means a bad performance, and but for the fact that the big guns ran out of ammunition, it might have been better still. That, of course, is to be expected when too much strain is thrown on the heavy artillery through lack of support.

Even as constituted, this team will always be a danger, but without good supports there is just that touch of uncertainty that opponents might batter their way through the weaknesses to victory. Richmond's strong posts are really strong, and there is an object lesson in the way they play. If they can get reasonable support for their strong posts, they will go high up.

St Kilda certainly has the "makings." Marking ability and pace are there for the asking, but they need ground players and if they can produce these to balance their aerial superiority, they'll make the "Four."

Must Be Simple

UMPIRING still presents many problems, and will continue to do so. Owing to the fact that umpires cannot be turned out of the one mould, the effect of the different umpiring personalities is to give a variety of interpretations to rules that are not couched in the simplest terms.

Regarding these points, the public becomes either reconciled or apathetic, even to the point of believing that what they see is correct.

On Saturday, I saw two attempts at marking close to the line penalised by free kicks because the ball finally went out, once by bouncing off the player's chest.

This is a direct contradiction to the word for word instruction given in the rule book. The real intention of the rule is hidden in a mass of words, and allows for a difference of opinion even among umpires. At present this rule is not being administered uniformly and according to the book. This makes the argument for simplicity in rules a strong one, and emphasises the necessity of putting this rule into words so simple that there can be no doubt about it.

I stress this point, because in the two instances mentioned the decisions were almost the difference between defeat and victory.

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Gordon Coventry Declares Gorringe was best of

Those Busy Rovers

League, idol, Collingwood hero, and champion goal-kicker, Gordon Coventry, saw many rovers in his 306 games of League football. He saw them under all sorts of conditions — wet, dry, windy and calm. In strong and weak teams rovers played their parts. None of their tricks went unnoticed by Gordon Coventry, who, in this story, tells of the elusive little 'uns and the methods that made them football stars. To Tasmanian Horrie Gorringe goes Coventry's vote for the best rover he has seen.

Frank Maher

Dick Reynolds

Harry Collier

Terry Brain

"Dicky" Harris

By GORDON COVENTRY as told to J. M. Rohan

ONE'S published opinions on the merits of footballers aren't likely to please everybody, so I had better make myself clear at the beginning. There were some rovers who were nearing the end of their tether when I joined. I did not see as much of George Haines, Alex Eason and Clarrie Hall as I would have liked. They were great rovers.

I am discussing the rovers of a later school, among which were some dazzling players.

Horrie Gorringe, the solid little Tasmanian, is the finest rover I have seen. I could describe him in three words—the perfect footballer—but his artistry is worth more praise than that.

Although short, Gorringe was as strong as a lion. He was as fast as a streak of lightning and could kick beautifully with either foot when tearing along at his top. When bumped he simply rolled over and landed on his feet without losing a stride. He would fight back like a terrier, never admitting defeat, although he was crashed heavily many times in games in which I played.

He would be going faster in the last quarter than most of his opponents were in the early stages of a match. IN FACT, HE COULD BE DESCRIBED AS A SUPER FOOTBALLER.

All moves to stop the effectiveness of Gorringe failed dismally.

The Tasmanian played the game for the fun he got out of it. He liked his football, and he liked Tasmania, too; so much so that he was not interested in the many offers made to him to come to Victoria to play.

The Coulter Law was not in operation in those days, but the offers made to Gorringe from more League clubs than one would have made the Coulter Law limit of £3 look silly.

It always seemed a great pity to me that the artistry of Gorringe was not seen by the multitude of Victorian football enthusiasts. To me his displays were so interesting that I was caught off my guard more than once as I stood watching him in action.

Made A Study Of The Game

Second to Gorringe I would place Frank Maher, former Essendon rover and brainy little tactician. Maher made a study of football, and his brilliance, pace, tricks and anticipation were all backed by glorious passes which, literally speaking, went down a comrade's throat.

Maher came out of a crush and instinctively put the ball in the right direction —always to the best advantage of his side. He had a swerve that invariably got him out of trouble. Never at any time did he play the man, and he hated to give away a free kick. His play left nothing to be desired.

In my opinion, Maher was second to Gorringe only because he did not have the strength and physique of the Tasmanian.

My old team mate, Harry Collier, comes next on my list of fine rovers. No rover of my time was as rugged as he, and I am voicing the opinion of everybody at Collingwood when I say that he was and still is an inspiration to the side. He takes and gives hard knocks in a spirit that no one could object to, and he finishes flat out in every game in which he plays.

His team mates realise his dependability. He never calls a ball unless he is in the box seat, and he always puts it to good use when it is played to him. An adept at getting in front of his man, he is awarded many free kicks. He takes all that the big men in opposing teams give him and never bears malice.

No team can boast a harder fighter for his side than Harry Collier.

Fastest Man Off The Mark

Ray Martin's work for the Tigers always impressed me. Ray was the fastest rover off the mark that I have ever seen. He could get into top gear in one stride. He put so much force into his accurate passes that team mates could be heard to grunt as the ball whacked them on the chest.

Clever at handling a ball, Martin is good under any weather conditions. He has the tenacity of Bentley and Dyer, to whom he roves, and is a footballer from whatever angle you look at him.

I know that many admirers of Haydn Bunton have asked the question long before arriving at this stage of my story, "What about Bunton?" Although Bunton was named as rover in teams selected for Fitzroy, I never accepted it in the true sense of the word.

Bunton was of a roving disposition. It didn't matter what position he was allotted, he wanted to be wherever the ball was. When supposed to be roving he was invariably to be seen flying for the ball.

Tireless was Bunton. He played football from the start to finish, never wasting time trying to get even with someone for old scores. The game has known no better exponent of handball, while his zig-zag run was reminiscent of Charlie Pannam's.

Bunton could get a game in any side I had anything to do in selecting, but I would have used his wonderful talent to better effect than he did while at Fitzroy. He was possibly the greatest individualist the League code has known, but not necessarily the greatest footballer, despite the honors that umpires have showered on him.

Other rovers of my time could be bracketed. It would be foolish to try to separate them. Some differed in style to others, but often the peculiarities of ruck men governed the styles of the little men who roved for them.

Essendon have been lucky with their rovers since the League was formed. Ernie Cameron and Charlie Hardy were first rovers for the Red and Blacks. Frank Maher came after and held the position down with dignity, and then Keith Forbes came along to show the Essendon officials that he could do a good job in Maher's absence.

Forbes is the most dangerous rover I have seen when in possession of the ball near goal. He has the knack of extricating himself from a crush to let fly with deadly accuracy for the goal posts.

His lightning-like dashes and wonderful kicks have been a delight to Essendon barrackers, but a pain in the neck to the supporters of opposing teams. If the goal-kicking record of Forbes is reviewed it will be seen that he is a decided menace.

Many big men have tried to tack labels on Forbes, but he is too elusive. And to think that the Dons have a man like Reynolds to carry on the roving bears out my contention that they have been lucky in getting so many champions in this department.

I will leave discussion on the merits of Dick Reynolds until I write an article on the best players of my time.

A Real Glutton

The biggest football glutton I know is Dick Harris, Richmond's rover. He wants the ball all the time, and goes in to get it. When he does get it he knows what to do with it.

Harris takes what is coming to him with a grin. His enthusiasm will carry him a long way. He is not afraid of the big men who try hard to bump him off his game. As the giants of opposing teams miss in their attempts to spread-eagle Harris he laughs and says, "Better luck next time!"

Hawthorn's veteran, Ted Poole, will go out of football without getting the praise he justly deserves. Poole has had to make his own opportunities since he went to Hawthorn simply because the Maybloomas have never had the call in the ruck.

Poole often countered by running round the pack to collar many of the hit-outs intended for the opposition rover.

Resting in a forward pocket, Poole was the most dangerous rover imaginable. He was a beautiful kick for his size, and a hard worker.

Never spectacular, but always effective, was Terry Brain. His Christian name was abbreviated; it should have been Terrier instead of Terry. He ignored the giants opposed to South Melbourne, and went into crushes fearlessly. Everyone liked Terry. Whenever he collected a hard bump he was often assisted to his feet by the donor. Terry would grin, and tell that he would get Dinny Kelleher to settle his account for him with interest.

Brain's popularity can be gauged by the minimum of fuss over his clearance; officials of his club were only too pleased to give him the opportunity of playing with Camberwell. Brain felt that his loss of pace would not allow him to hold his place at South.

Libbis The Most Dashing

Bill Libbis was the most dashing rover I saw in the League. His whole game was one of dash and dazzle. At full speed he could turn in the air when grabbed, and get away without losing his stride. Many practised that stunt, but Libbis stood out alone. Bill was a humorist whose short knickers were the cause of much merriment. Anyhow, Bill Libbis had legs worth showing.

"Tich" Shorten was a marvel for his size and weight. I doubt if a lighter player got a game in a League team during my years of football. I looked at the casualty list nightly to see if he had been killed in collision with some of the League hefties.

"Tich" could stage more free kicks, and get away with them, than the other 35 players in the game.

He had a stride as long as a wet week, and was able to ride a bump as a seagull does a wave. A grand little player was "Tich" Shorten.

No cleverer rover than Johnnie Leonard has worn a guernsey. His success came from careful plotting and planning. He never wasted a kick, always giving his side the advantage when his well-directed kicks went to the man in position.

Leonard's coolness got him out of tight corners. While ruck giants were clashing, Leonard would scoop the ball up and get his kick in as he called to his hefty mates to get on with the game. Leonard was not rugged. He relied on his cleverness to pull him through.

"I'm of more value to my side when on my feet than on a stretcher," he was heard to say.

Victorians did not see much of Leonard when in his prime, but it can be taken from me that he was a rover of the highest class. Ask anyone who saw him as a lad in the pitched battle between Victoria and Western Australia at Hobart in 1924.

Ron Cooper, another West Australian who plays for Carlton, is one of the roving types of rovers. No one I have seen can create the loose man so effectively as Cooper. He always seemed to be able to get away on his own. It puzzles opponents no end, and many were the pow-wows held to try to counter Cooper's cleverness.

Teddy Baker, rover for Collingwood and Geelong, who came to the Magpies from Wonthaggi, was the gamest midget imaginable. The manner in which he dashed into crushes while with Collingwood had Perc. Rowe, George Clayden, Bob Makeham, Joe Poulter and brother Syd. worried. They marvelled at his pluck and cheek, but Teddy could weave his way through crushes and was too clever to run into trouble. While captain of Geelong he showed the same skill and tenacity, and was one of the most consistent rovers in the game.

And having raked over the grand little men who have made history as rovers, I will name a player who could have outshone them all if his team had been disposed to play him as a rover permanently. I refer to the ex-world champion sprinter—Austin Robertson. On occasions he was called in to rove for Bisset and Kelleher. That pair of huskies could have made Robertson the most brilliant star of all rovers.

Fastest Footballer Of All Time

It will be remembered that in 1934 South Melbourne put up some phenomenal bursts, usually in the third quarter. They kicked as many as 13, 12 and 11 goals in a quarter against strong teams. And if inquiries are made it will be found that Kelleher shepherded while Bisset got the ball and gave it to Robertson, who dashed thirty to forty yards and then kicked the ball sixty yards in the direction of South's goal. Weighing 12.7 just on 6ft., a glorious mark, one of the best kicks in Australia and the fastest footballer of all time, Robertson could have been King of Rovers had South Melbourne so desired.

Next Week.—Ruck Combinations of Last Twenty Years.

AS I SEE THE GAME

By ROD McGREGOR

Having witnessed at Victoria Park the battle between two of the best performers of the season, I am satisfied that, barring accidents, both will hold a high position in League affairs this season.

Each team, in its own particular line, possesses a predominant quality fit to win a premiership, and which must average highly in the season's work-out.

COLLINGWOOD, fielding a side with many of its strong posts missing, gave a display of team-work that no other team in the League has yet shown. The fact that the team as a whole could not see the match out was largely due to the loss of Regan just when Carlton started to apply the pressure. Regan had been holding an otherwise mediocre defence together, and without him it crumpled. Once they recover from their injuries Collingwood has the men to fill the gaps.

When Regan went the man most missed was Boyall. He was just the type needed to throw a spanner into Carlton's smooth-working machine and break the line of attack. Froud was another who would have been particularly useful in the closing stages. Carlton pulversied this weakness in Collingwood's defence and slipped through unhindered.

Team-work is a Collingwood slogan that should now be changed to "Team-work and Todd." Todd is the greatest menace playing in the forward division, and teams trying to solve the Todd problem will need sleeping draughts to get a good night's rest.

Todd is irrepressible, and is just another instance of how difficult it is to keep a good man down. After his display on Saturday, coupled with what I saw of him at Richmond, it is going to be very difficult to pin him down.

If Collingwood can overcome their injuries and field a normal team, I look upon their asset contained in "Team-work and Todd" as the means that will keep them well up the list and into the final four.

Carlton Carries The Punch

DESPITE the fact that they were clearly outplayed in the first half, and that their display made one wonder how they held top position, Carlton showed a strength of purpose and determination that will carry them far. Admittedly they got a lucky "break" through Collingwood's loss of Regan, but their finish was so devastating that they may have won with Collingwood all standing. That is just one of the things that cannot be speculated on with certainty.

The last quarter total was one of the largest kicked by a visiting team on the Collingwood ground in any one quarter, and might even have been larger. Only a display of grit and football of a high quality could have shown Carlton a 55-point gain in the last half of the game, more particularly against Collingwood at home. It is the stamp of quality.

In this last half Carlton played a very even side, and it is this even quality plus grit and determination, that makes them fit to hold the top position. These factors should carry them on to a successful season and possible premiership. Clearly, Carlton have the players, but they will need to use discrimination in their placings and avoid experiments. The job ahead is a careful study of each man's fitness for his position, and a strong hand on the reins to make him hold it.

Square Pegs

CARLTON'S seven-man shift at half-time was either a desperation move or else a sudden wake-up to the fact that they had too many square pegs in round holes. However, it did the trick, and from that time out every one of the moved men showed 100 per cent. improvement in play.

This fact suggests that the problem of placing has not been seriously studied at Carlton. If this experience is taken to heart the team should improve by 3 or 4 goals. In placing a team it is not enough to put a player where he will merely get his proportion of kicks, but where he will best contribute to the smooth working of the team. A player of the forceful type is often better suited in a position where he can force the ball to more scientific hands, and where errors due to robustness will not be so vital.

An opportunity for Carlton to fill Shea's position lies in young Baxter, and I was rather surprised that the obvious advantages to be gained by having a left-footer in this position were not readily realised. As a case in point, this might well serve as a hint to teams who select players en masse rather than by their team's requirements.

This and other faults in placing are not confined to Carlton. In my opinion there are numbers of players in League ranks who would better continue the lines of communication or bring them to a successful end, if played in other positions. If a team is to be a machine it should be fitted like a machine, and not with spare parts lying around. This phase of football is worth more consideration than it appears to get.

A Good Parking System

IT is refreshing to see a display of initiative such as that given by Jim Park, of Carlton, on Saturday. Moved to the full back position against the Terrible Todd, he introduced something new in the way of stopping a dangerous forward. The Collingwood forward had been leading to the ball and flying to tremendous heights quite out of reach of any attacks from the rear. Attempts to punch out from the back were often a couple of feet short of the mark, and quite ineffective. This was a nice job to have to take on.

However, Park is a versatile player, on whom responsibility rests lightly. He reversed the idea, took the front position, and went for the ball himself, instead of using negative spoiling tactics.

Jumping high, he often obscured his opponent's view, and showed conclusively that it pays to go for the ball.

Todd is a great judge of a mark, and can get his height from the front position without any boost from the pack. He appears to like the clear view of the ball and does better when leading. If rising from the back is a Todd weakness, Park found it, and although opportunities were not nearly so plentiful in the second half, he must be credited with quick thinking for the tactics he so successfully employed. A little originality sometimes does the trick. Unfortunately we do not see enough of it.

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Gordon Coventry On—

Ruck Combinations

By Gordon Coventry
as told to J. M. Rohan

Famous ruck men—Top, Syd. Coventry (Collingwood), Roy Cazaly (South Melbourne), and Arthur Coghlan (Geelong). Coghlan is wearing the Victorian guernsey.

Followers—the strong men of teams playing the Australian code of football—are the mainsprings of a side. Their success at the bounce, ball-up or kick-in means opportunities for those further up field.

Being the spearhead of attack for Collingwood, also for Victoria in interstate and carnival games, Gordon Coventry, champion goal-kicker of all time, watched with interest the fluctuating fortunes of the rucks of teams he played for and those in opposition. Coventry saw the "he men" followers of the days before the "out of bounds rule" was altered in 1925. He makes comparisons with them and ruckmen who have played since.

THE big burly followers who comprised the rucks in my time always had my admiration and esteem. I consider that ruckmen do a job and a half, and from what I know they collect more than their share of bruises and hard knocks. They are, in my opinion, the mainspring of the team, and no man who has played in my position—full forward—can hope for success if the rucks fail to make opportunities for him.

Of course the book of football prescribes for the rucks to get the ball to the rover who passes it to the half forward, who, in turn, puts it into the hands of the full forward, whose job is to pilot it through the goal posts. It's as simple as falling off a log.

When I joined the League in 1920, the shepherder was in evidence, but his worth was known to his co-follower. With the advent of the new boundary rule in 1925, the shepherder remained, but he had to be a type who could play football when the occasion demanded—men such as Perc. Bentley, Arthur Coghlan, Jack Bissett, Dinny Kelleher, Len Metherell, Stan. Penberthy, Norm. Beckton, George Clayden, Percy Rowe, George Rudolph, Pete Hardiman, Len Wigraft, Goldie Collins, Colin Deane and my brother Syd. The speeding up of the game demanded that all and every one of the 18 players should be able to do more than bump, push, scrag and hinder opponents from playing football.

A Brilliant Combination

It has been generally conceded that football has attained a high standard since the war. And one would get a poor hearing if heard to say that the players of the last 20 years were not well up to average. The players I have mentioned—those who had to make the way clear for their brilliant, high-flying team mates—give an idea of the class of big man the sport attracted. The giants always seem to impress more than the pigmies.

The famous Cazaly-Fleiter-Tandy combination dominated when I first played League football, and in the 18 years that followed they were not toppled from their high pedestal in my estimation. It was the most brilliant working combination I have seen, each of the trio being a champion in his own department.

Cazaly was one of the most wonderful aerial artists the game has known. Fleiter was a strong young player who could hold two opponents back with his outspread arms as his partner soared into the air to the accompaniment of the roar, "Up there Cazaly." And Mark Tandy was always as busy as a hive of bees with ten times their sting.

In my long association with football, during which time I had many trips to other States, I did not see a ruck combination that could call the tune to the one mentioned.

And Didn't They Get Some Bruises

My second vote is more or less in the family. It is not my style to skite about the deeds of the Coventrys, but brother Syd. and Percy Rowe were a combination that worried opponents and won many games for Collingwood. They had a dashing little rover in Bill Libbis, who teamed admirably with them. And I'll wager that the trio could show more bruises at the end of a hard fought game than the rest of the team put together.

If anyone differs from me in saying that the Rowe-Coventry-Libbis ruck was second only to the South Melbourne-ites for understanding, cleverness, strength and effectiveness, then I will ask: "How did the Magpies win four premierships in a row—1927-8-9-30?"

A close third would be Len Wigraft, Goldie Collins and Clive Fergie. How Wigraft and Collins could bump! I've sampled their weight a hundred times, but still hand it to them for being one of the most effective combinations the Maroons have fielded and the League has known.

Standing in front of a steam roller bolting down a steep hill would be preferable to getting in the road of Goldie Collins. Did he stop any hard knocks in return? Oh dear, no.

The Tigers have never been really weak in the following department. They have had some wonderful big men, including Barney Herbert, "Ginger" Moffat and Hughie James, but the men who have made their first ruck in recent years—Percy Bentley, Jack Dyer and Ray Martin—get fourth place on my list for ruck combinations of the last 20 years. Apply to the opening ruck men of any of the other 11 League teams if you require more than my words that the Tiger captain and his pals are tough, relentless, clever footballers.

Carlton had a great ruck but did not realise it. I refer to the time when Dinny Kelleher made room for Charley Davey to show football crowds how high marks should be taken, and the ball hit out to the rover.

Davey was a shining star. He knew that his ruck partner, though not spectacular, would shepherd him while he flew high into the air to pull down some sensational marks.

A wave of football insanity surely passed over Carlton when they allowed Kelleher to transfer to South Melbourne.

The Davey-Kelleher combination worked with Ansell Clarke as rover. They were always hard to beat and can be regarded as one of the best rucks Carlton has had for many years. Ser-

Possibly it was [illegible] of my time.

[illegible]liance of Charley Davey that prompted me to put him [illegible] of Rope Hi[illegible]n and his pals ahead Carlton, fine [illegible]ins-Berromeo-McLatchie, doubt [illegible]ruck of years ago. No would p[illegible] supporters of the Blues [illegible]binations. [illegible]e between the two com-

Geelong [illegible]

[illegible]ople would argue a good case for Arthur Coghlan, Len Metherell and Tommy Quinn. When up against serious opposition this trio resembled a tornado at the height of its destructiveness.

No follower I know had more experience, tricks, tenacity, strength, will-to-win and bigger heart than Arthur Coghlan. He could emerge from the fiercest clash with a grin on his face. He stood up to many strenuous years of League football and the harder the game the better he enjoyed it.

While I vote the Coghlan-Metherell-Quinn ruck the best I saw playing for Geelong, I must admit the best sustained effort I ever saw from a Corio ruck was when Coghlan was teamed with Chambers against Syd Coventry and Percy Rowe. They staged a glorious battle for every minute of a match on the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Any ruck that Pete Hardiman was in could be depended on to do well, as Hardiman, even now, plays a tenacious game from the first bounce to the final bell.

If any Essendon supporter puts a ruck combination of my time for the red and blacks ahead of Norm Beckton-Paddy Walsh and Frank Maher, then I will be genuinely surprised. And I make that choice while remembering that fine trio the late Syd Barker-Percy Rawle and Charlie Hardy.

Percy Rowe (Collingwood) wearing a Northcote uniform.

Beckton was a colossal fellow who struck a good patch, while Walsh was one of the finest footballers the game has known. A leg injury never allowed him to stretch out in his best style, otherwise he would have been a super player.

There is no need to recount the deeds of Frank Maher. He was a clever, brainy rover who finished off the work started by his hefty team mates in artistic style.

Stan Penberthy and Norman Ware were the best I saw for Footscray. With Bernie O'Brien roving they could hold their own with the best, but they got little support. Invariably their good work just fizzled out on the forward line as they battled against odds.

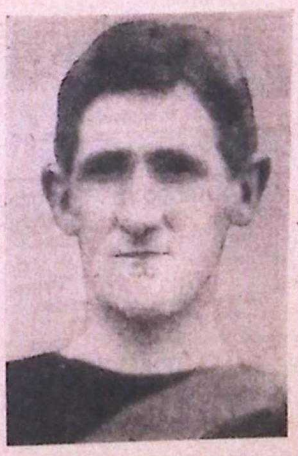
When the late "Flops" Phillips was following for St. Kilda with Ludlow they more than held their own. They had "Tiger" Bence as rover and formed what I consider the best ruck St. Kilda had in my time.

Hawthorn have never been particularly strong in the ruck. I would say that Byrne-Mills and Ted Poole is the best they have fielded since joining the League. Unfortunately, they have had to split up so often that they could not be expected to win reputation as did some of the rucks of other teams.

Warne-Smith was a champion follower, in fact a champion in any position, but he was not teamed long enough with any partner to make history for Melbourne from a ruck combination point of view.

Valiant Lone-Hand Efforts

Johnnie Lewis was another champion follower who did not get a continuity of support from other ruckmen at North Melbourne. Consequently the giant Lewis is getting near the end of his career without sharing honors for being a member of a top-notch League ruck team. His lone hand efforts for North



Barney Herbert, champion Richmond follower.

Melbourne must go down in football history as some of the finest seen.

It is not hard for me to name the best ruck Victoria has encountered in interstate or carnival matches. Without hesitation I hand the belt to Jerry Sunderland, Staunch Owens and Johnny Leonard, who represented Western Australia in 1926.

Sunderland struck one of those bright patches that made him outstanding. Owens was one of the hardest players to beat at that time. Victorians saw enough of Johnny Leonard in the course of his career to realise what a little champion he must have been when at the top of his form.

Believe me when I say I am conferring a high honor on the three Westralians named, as great men in Tom Outridge, of W.A., and Tom Leahy, Bruce McGregor and other South Australians were in the field in my time. Their partners did not combine well enough to take the honors away from Sunderland, Owens and Leonard. Nevertheless, they made their presence felt and were grand exponents of the Australian code.

So there you have my considered opinions of ruck men spread over two decades of football. They may differ from your opinions, but what odds? I was ever quick to appreciate good play by my team mates or opponents and the views I have expressed in this story are memories that I take out of League football.

Incidentally I would ask football fans to throw their minds back over the personnel of teams that have had success; if they didn't possess a good first ruck then I'm a bad judge of footballers.

(NEXT WEEK: Those Dear Old Boots of Mine.)

INTER-VARSITY RUGBY
Melbourne Defeated

IN the inter-Universities carnival at Sydney on Monday Queensland were far too good for Melbourne at Rugby Union, winning by 27 to nil. The losers lacked combination. Maclean, outside centre, ran well but received no support from the wingers. N. Morgan, captain of Melbourne, retired with torn shoulder muscles.

Sydney ran over Adelaide to win by 20 to 6, though the home team fielded none of its premiership side.

Today (Wednesday) Melbourne will play Adelaide and Sydney will meet Queensland.

AS I SEE THE GAME

By ROD McGREGOR

The rucks are the dominating influence in the Australian Game. This fact is often lost sight of in the search for brilliant placed men, leaving teams hollow inside.

As a means for getting first use of the ball and creating the match-winning loose man, there is nothing in our game that approaches good ruck work.

THE bounce and the throw-in are so peculiar to the Australian game that they make good rucks a vital necessity if success is to be attained. In some teams the art of roving is getting back to the standard of the days when rucks were rucks, but as yet others have not placed a high enough value on their rucks as to build the team round them. This is the answer to the question why a number of teams continue to fail. They scout for champion this and champion that, who have to have the ball delivered to them to be effective. In effect, they put up the supports of the team structure before putting in the foundations.

I repeat the statement made some weeks ago that good rucks with good ordinary backing will win this year's premiership. The number of "turn-ups" this season seems to be more than usual, but if the games are analysed these victories are not so unexpected as they appear on paper. Some of the lesser lights are realising the value of building from the inside, and practically every case of unexpected victory has been due to superior ruck work commanding first use of the ball. They have the stars in the right place — on the ball, instead of mugs on the ball and stars shivering in places.

Take a good tip and sum up winning teams on ruck strength. Provided they have good useful support the teams with the rucks are going to be well in the picture.

Tricolors Triumph

THE story of Footscray's triumph over St. Kilda can be told in a few words. With Ware as the superman, complete domination of the rucks gave Footscray continued possession of the ball. Backing up and leading out into position did the rest. As long as Footscray were content to take what their rucks were handing out and play the team game they had nothing to worry about, and gave a first half demonstration of how football should be played.

To the credit of St. Kilda, it must be said that at no time did they employ questionable tactics to bustle the other side off its game, but tried to match the brilliance of Footscray in a proper way. Footscray played its best football while the game had still to be won, but with the game in their pockets success seemed to go to the heads of a few, and there was a temporary lapse into individualism. It was only during this period that Footscray were seriously opposed.

Fortunately, the lapse occurred where it counted least, according to the state of the game, and with the rucks still giving nothing away it had no effect on the final result.

Later on the team swung back into its first half stride and finished off the game in a manner that reminded me of their old V.F.A. days. Herein lie big possibilities for the best Footscray year since their entry into League ranks, and, as I see it, there are the best of reasons to support this.

Kelly's Colts

THEIR sudden entry into the "four" is a triumph for team spirit and youthful enthusiasm properly applied. By seeking to play football first and letting the wins take care of themselves, Kelly's colts are taking the right path to ultimate success. If they followed this golden rule they are sure to keep well up in the firing line. I can see a definite change in Footscray's methods, and many of the moves made in their last two matches convince me that they are receiving the right kind of instruction. The job ahead is to maintain balance, and to instil into the younger brigade that wins are in proportion to the quality of football played.

Enthusiasm allowed to run riot is often upsetting, but if the lesson that smooth working is just as important as physical fitness can be drilled in, then the matches against Footscray this season will command far greater respect than for years past.

Speaking to some ardent supporters after the match, they were inclined to judge some of the players on their individual efforts. That does not always work out, because some players have a team value that is more useful than individual brilliance. I like to look at the crew as a whole, and note how each fits in. Better a good team man than a champion who rocks the boat.

However, there are great possibilities in the side, and if these colts are allowed to settle down and continue on the lines as shown on Saturday, then Footscray will have the first premiership essential—a team.

Pin-Pricks

A BIG game commanding big money and big public interest should be administered with ideas proportionately broad. There is no room for the many pin-pricks that make some of the rules of the game look like a pin-cushion.

In this respect the Out of Bounds rule is easily the worst, and the sooner it is administered on broad lines the better for the game. Probably the most irritating is the interpretation of what constitutes a kick applied to this rule.

At Footscray on Saturday, Rayment, of St. Kilda, jumped high and turned his back to block a kick. The kick was such a poor one that it struck him on the back of the calf and bounced out of bounds. The umpire was forced, according to the law, to give the player another kick, much to the astonishment of Rayment.

I have followed the rules of the game through all changes since the first meeting of the Australasian Football Council in 1908, and the original intention was that below the knee constituted a kick, but only by the man with the ball in hand or kicking at it. That is quite feasible, because a kick implies some motion of the foot towards the object, and not merely an accidental knock on the leg by the ball.

Had this occurred near the behind post and the ball gone behind, Rayment would have been credited with a good save. On the other hand, had it still gone just the other side, the kicker would have received another kick, presumably because he made a bad one the first time. This does not make sense, and it is just about time all these irritating things were cleaned out of the rules and they were made broad and plain like the game itself.

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Gordon Coventry's Football Memoirs

Those Dear Old Boots of Mine

Although it takes 18 well-trained athletes to make a football team, the spotlight plays round the man who fills the full forward position—the man who kicks the goals. The Australian code is one that demands goals . . . goals and still more goals. Every club is looking for a "sure foot," but Coventrys, Pratts, Vallences and Mohrs are hard to find.

What was the secret of Gordon Coventry's success? You would probably answer—those clever hands that hauled down marks, or, maybe, his deadly accurate kicks. Quite right. Both were factors; but there was something else — his old boots. So dilapidated were they, the poorest beggar wouldn't have picked them out of the rubbish bin, but to Gordon they were "those dear old boots of mine."

By Gordon Coventry, as told to J. M. Rohan

BY no stretch of imagination could my football boots be described as elegant footwear. Nor could they be called golden slippers, though they really were, as they earned me a lot of money — yes, money in excess of the Coulter Law award — as well as a reputation as a record-breaking goalkicker. They were a source of amusement to visitors to the Collingwood dressing room, the bane of the boot knubber's life and a worry to my wife.

To me those old boots were precious. When a football had to be kicked at training or in a match my only concern was those dear old boots of mine.

While players at Collingwood were measured each season for new boots, I was content to carry on with my old ones. WITH THEM I KICKED OVER 1000 GOALS in LEAGUE, INTERSTATE AND CARNIVAL GAMES. They never failed me. And though I have retired from League football I still wear the old "canoes" while coaching the Collegians.

Old boots, like old friends, give you a feeling of happiness and security

Three pairs of boots sufficed for my 18 years as a player for Collingwood, so that I did not cost the club much in regard to boots. As I played for the first two seasons in a pair of my own street boots in which I had stops placed, my boot account would work out at somewhere in the vicinity of 2/ a season.

Had Them For Six Seasons

My second pair of football boots were made to measure. I was sorry to part with them after six seasons, but it was a case of necessity. Having contracted influenza I was laid up for nine weeks. When I got on to my feet again my ankles were affected.

My doctor laughed when told that I intended to have another game of football.

"You'll be lucky if you can walk any distance much less run on those flat feet," was his cheerful reply.

In a trial run my football boots felt as though they didn't belong to me. There was no alternative but to get another pair. And that's how I became the proud owner of the soles, heels and uppers of the casings which were rudely referred to as the boxes the boots came in.

I was measured for them in 1927, and they are still going strong!

Harry Norman, the man who was in charge of boots at Collingwood, lost sleep over my old boots in the last few years of my association with the club. He wanted me to get new boots, but I always cajoled him into putting another patch on, or a new sole or heel.

I did have a reserve pair of boots, but I wouldn't wear them.

Norman couldn't view a match unless he had my spare boots under his arm. I wore my old boots wet or fine.

Norman told me more than once that the boots would not take another stop as the soles were like a colander. Each Saturday he would look to see if I had a new pair. Not seeing any, he would thrust my old warriors into my hands and murmur something uncomplimentary.

If there was such a thing as aristocracy in football boots, Norman would never have conferred an earldom on mine. "The laces are the best part of this outfit," he said once.

While the remainder of the team were handed their boots, nicely polished, mine came to me without any. They didn't see a tin of boot polish for years.

Faced A Barrage Of Rebukes

For foot comfort I faced a barrage of rebukes from my wife, as well as from Harry Norman. When I failed to get a few goals my wife would say, "There you are; it's those disgraceful boots." Should I gather in a bag of goals the next week I would even the score by saying, "Well, dear, the old boots couldn't have been the cause of my lapse last week."

I had good reason to call my boots golden slippers. You may remember the day I kicked 16 goals against Hawthorn —a record to that time. An ardent supporter of Collingwood was so pleased with that performance that he told me he wanted to recognise it in some tangible manner.

The Coulter Law debarred me from accepting anything in the nature of a monetary reward, but my admirer found a way of overcoming the difficulty. He asked my wife if she came under the jurisdiction of the League.

As she didn't he gave her a cheque for £50 on condition that she would buy something for the home that would remind her of the feat and of the donor. My wife chose a nice suite of furniture. I valued his appreciation of my effort as much as his present.

My old boots earned me other rewards from this very generous sportsman. When I kicked nine goals in the final of 1928 against Richmond, a message was sent me that he would like to see me in his office at the first opportunity. I was congratulated and handed £25.

Goals By The Dozen

The trusty old boots helped me to convert the wonderful play of the Collingwood team into goals by the dozen. Against Fitzroy in 1930 17 goals were credited me, while in 1933 I got 15 against Essendon and the next year the Hawthorn backs gave me enough latitude to score 14.

The first year of service from my old boots was a glorious one. It was in 1927, the first of Collingwood's four premierships in a row. In addition, it marked the carnival year when I scored 40 goals.

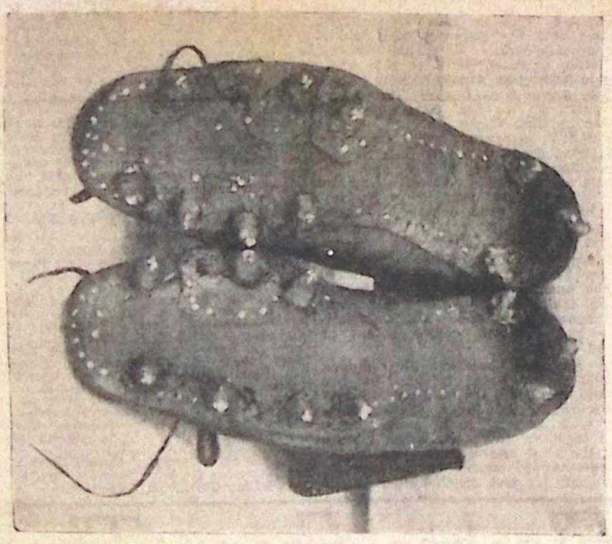
And speaking of goals in carnival series recalls the Victorian side of 1933. Syd and I felt that our inclusion in that side was more or less a consolation for long service to the game. In fact, my 15 goals against Essendon was the saving grace for me.

It will be remembered that South Melbourne were in the ascendancy that season and Bob Pratt was turning on his goalkicking orgies. He was the carnival team's full forward, but an accident put him out of court to give me the opportunity of getting 33 goals to lead the kickers. So it will be seen that a pair of old boots can be an asset to a player, his club, his State and the game.

An old supporter of Collingwood told me I should preserve my old boots for the Museum. I am afraid they will fall apart soon running round with the amateurs. No boot specialist is now at my beck and call to keep them in repair.

Perhaps this little story of boots will leave its imprint on players and clubs. A well made pair of football boots should have a longer life than one season. With age comes comfort in football boots, and that should be the aim of every man playing the game.

My advice to juniors is to run a new pair of football boots in before the studs are affixed. An experienced boot knubber should then be able to decide exactly where the studs should be placed to give balance and comfort. When you strike a comfortable boot, hang on to it like grim death. It will help you in whatever position you play in your team.



Soles that were saved for ever and a day. The Collingwood studder certainly had his work cut out to keep Coventry's boots stopped.

Studder Plays An Important Part

In my opinion studding boots is an art. They must be placed in position to suit the wearer. If a man is inclined to walk with toes turned in, his boots have to be studded differently from those of a man with a different action. If studs are properly fitted a player should be able to stand on a hard surface with balance and comfort.

I have seen players in carnival teams suffering from the effects of poorly studded and ill-fitting boots. And I remember the day when Collingwood received a beating from Carlton through a number of players losing their stops. Collingwood had a new man doing the boot knubbing that week and he cost them four premiership points.

I wish long life to the boots of all footballers, and direction to those who are expected to kick goals. I found that it paid to be the possessor of a pair of boots that I could wear with ease. Even though people laughed at my untidy feet, and team mates used to throw their lemon peels at my boots at three-quarter time, I was loyal to those dear old boots of mine.

Next Week: Thrilling games

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AS I SEE THE GAME

By Rod McGregor

THE reopening of the case of Jack Mueller, of Melbourne, is certainly unusual, but not really important.

If it does create a precedent, what of it? Justice never should be the slave of precedent.

However, this departure from the old order of no appeal serves to recall some interesting sidelights on the investigation of famous cases with which I had close contact.

IN the present case it is probable that the only reason for the review of the decision is concern on the part of the members of the Tribunal that no injustice shall be done. Taken over a number of years, I am of the opinion that investigation committees and tribunals never have been far off the mark and attempts at reopening cases have served no good purpose.

In practically every case where suspensions were inflicted there has been evidence that some punishment was merited. In a very few cases decisions have been reversed, but only because they were given on unconstitutional grounds.

Went After Offender

It may be interesting to know that pre-war investigators attached little or no importance to the person actually struck. They went after the offender and, provided they established the fact that he struck somebody, it mattered little whether it was Jones or Smith. It was just a case of "no red herrings need apply."

At that time League investigation committees tried cases that are now tried by the Independent Tribunal appointed with the object of removing any possible club prejudice. There was no appeal from the decision of this committee, and taking all things into consideration, the idea was very sound.

As an adherent of Carlton over a long period, both as player and administrator, I had personal contact with a number of famous cases in which Carlton players often were involved as culprits.

Carlton cases were as famous as their football, and it seemed that we could not shake off the legacy bequeathed to us by those who purloined the sheep in Adelaide.

A case not without a touch of humor occurred on the eve of the second of our famous premierships and which almost had serious consequences for us. It happened at South Melbourne in a mix-up that ranked as a classic. Strangely enough there was no umpire's report but feeling ran so high that the committee of each club reported several opponents to the League.

With due formality the cases were heard, players sentenced, and as both teams had to meet in the final each was without several stalwarts. After the premiership, which we narrowly won, was over, an astute League delegate raised the question that the reporting of players by clubs was unconstitutional.

A hurried search proved this to be the case, and the suspensions were removed. As our team wag, Jim Marchbanks (one of the suspended) humorously remarked, "Now we'll be free to play all the summer." So ended a case where the grounds for investigation were quite sound, but the means taken were not according to Hoyle.

Caused Great Stir

The famous Topping-Streckfuss case was another that caused a great stir. It happened to strike one of these times when everyone was saying, "Something will have to be done about it." Subsequent police court proceedings did not improve the chances of the culprit, and the action taken by the Investigation Committee was very severe. There was no doubt of the player's guilt, but I thought George was unlucky to get a two years' suspension for striking a single blow in defence of a comrade.

Once again we were in the headlines, but apart from the severity of the sentence, no question could be raised against the decision of the Investigation Committee nor the means employed to arrive at the verdict.

In view of the circumstances, any thought of appeal would have been waste of time. Neither the case, nor the manner of handling it, warranted appeal and it was well for all concerned that the word "final" put an end to an unsavory incident.

In later year the Don-Greenhill case called for much comment, and the powers of the League to go on with the case were challenged, because there was no report of the incident.

However, the League, under its constitution, claimed the right to review the conduct of the match, called the players in and considered that there was a case to answer. The case was then sent on to the Tribunal to be deal with, and the Richmond player was suspended.

Controllers Must Have Power

While this was claimed by some to be an action without precedent, I do not agree with that view. It is unreasonable to suggest that the body controlling its games shall not have the power to review the conduct of any one or all of them. Once again the word "final" had its points in that it dropped the curtain and closed the discussion.

Many other cases of equal or slightly less importance have come and gone. Take the famous Downs case, as an instance. It is still argued that because all attempts at reopening this case failed it should for all time be the established custom that under no circumstance should a review be allowed. While I contend that "no appeal" has served a very good purpose, I cannot go so far as to say that the allowing of an appeal will create any dangerous precedent, always provided, of course, that the power to review carries with it the power to amend the sentence for better or worse. It might not always work out so well as it looks and the clamor for a fresh hearing might carry a sting in its tail.

These matters might be safely left in the hands of those handling the business. The practice of years instanced in the cases outlined above gives the assurance that the control of these cases is in good hands and brings us back to our starting point.

Whether the reopening of the Mueller case creates a precedent or not it is merely unusual and of little or no importance.

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A Game of Hard Bumps

By Gordon Coventry, as told to J. M. Rohan

No footballer attaining League standard played that grade long without getting knocks and thrills by the dozen. Those who last long enough to play 100 games are regarded as veterans. Any of them could tell a story of rough games, hard knocks, thrills and incidents that would make good reading. But what could the hero of 300 odd games tell?

League champion Gordon Coventry today recalls the match that gave him his greatest thrill, also the hardest game in which he played. Pleasant memories he took out of League football. He wishes he could play them over again.

THE most thrilling game of my football career? Let me think now. Oh, yes, it was the grand final of 1930 between Geelong and Collingwood at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Geelong barely made the four that season, and at one stage of the grand final appeared to have the premiership in their grasp.

Jock McHale, Collingwood's coach, was ill that day — the first match he missed in years. Brother Syd shouldered the responsibilities of coach and captain and preached the gospel that force was to be met with force. No one knew better than Syd the strength of Arthur Coghlan, Pete Hardiman, Jack Evans and Len Metherell, giants of the Corio ruck. And Syd knew that their methods would be in keeping with such ruck strength. It could be nothing else but a battle royal.

Tore In Like Demons

The ball was bounced by Bob Scott. That was the signal for the rucks to tear into each other like demons. It was a matter of who would crack up first under the strain.

In all my football I never saw such violent collisions.

Just visualise big hefty Metherell, strong man Coghlan, tenacious Pete Hardiman, and the lion-hearted Evans. If they don't measure up as a quartet of he-men in guernseys, then I've never seen any.

Now try to recall the Sunday school methods of George Clayden, Bob Makeham, Len Murphy, and Syd Coventry, all flat out to win a record for Collingwood—four premierships in a row. At least it will be conceded that the men who comprised the first and second rucks for Geelong and Collingwood were worthy of such a big occasion.

Geelong sprung the surprise move of the season on Collingwood, but it could be understood the moment the game commenced.

Len Metherell, who weighed "half a ton," was Geelong's rover. When Syd noted that move he told Magpies in the vicinity that the M.C.G. would look like a battlefield before the game had progressed far. He was right. Players were in the hands of the trainers from the start. Men kept on tearing in, intent on making the other side wilt.

Scott could have filled his book with "suspects" in the first quarter. However, he let things rip along to the finish without taking a player's number. The crowd enjoyed it, and I'll wager there wasn't a player among the 36 who didn't think it the most exhilarating game of his life.

At quarter time the scores were 3—2 to 2—3 in favor of Collingwood.

As the teams changed ends there was a cessation of hostilities, and humorous exchanges between players showed that they were still sane. The wave of sanity seemed to pass the moment the ball was bounced again, and then clashes were more frequent and more severe. The big men of Geelong simply played like raging tornadoes. They bashed their way to a lead of 21 points at half time; it looked a winning lead in such a hard-fought game.

The glorious uncertainty of the turf it nothing to the glorious uncertainty of football. Collingwood were inspired during the interval. Syd called on the big men in his side to meet the heavy artillery of Geelong with every ounce of their weight. He instructed the midgets of Collingwood to hover round while the big fellows clashed.

Our little chaps darted in and out of the scrimmages like lightning, and Collingwood kicked 8—4 in the third quarter to Geelong's single point.

The scores in that quarter do not denote the play. The clashes continued with the same enthusiasm, even though the sting was going out of players. And the Geelong fellows finished full of fight to score two points more than the Magpies in the final quarter.

Game Of The Century

That premiership went to Collingwood with the final scores of 14—16 to 9—16, and it will be remembered by old timers at Collingwood as the game of the century.

Many times afterwards the team was called on by its coach to turn on another game like the 1930 grand final.

Clayden and Allday were players who could take all that was coming. They collected and gave more hard bumps in that game than most players do in half a dozen matches. Bob Makeham received the buffeting of his career. He declared that he was hit with the four goal posts and that the Grey Smith stand fell on him. His body was black and blue after the game.

Bill Libbis, who roved for Collingwood, played a grand game and was rolled many times, said at half-time: "Out there is no place for a little bloke."

No one enjoyed the battle up to the interval more than I did; I had a good view of all the clashes. Collingwood's half-time score of 3-7 gives some idea of how little I was doing for my side. It did not surprise me when Syd said, "Come out to centre half-forward and see if you can't get a few rolls and goals."

I obeyed and got what he mentioned. The rolls exceeded the goals—twofold.

From first to last the strain was on in that hectic game. I do not recall ever finishing so tired in a game. It was without doubt the most thrilling of all Collingwood's premierships.

A victory party was held at Syd's home on the night of the 1930 premiership. For the big fellows it was pathetic. None of them could move. The midgets came into their own, telling the big fellows that they couldn't take it. That season found a few Magpies losing their plumage. Those who dropped out took the memory of a hectic send-off battle with them.

The Roughest Match

There is a vast difference between a hard slogging, thrilling game like the one against Geelong and the one we played against Carlton in a semi-final in 1931. The Blues subjected the Magpies to the heaviest battery they had ever encountered. A casualty list of seven had Collingwood up against it good and hard.

Carlton, intent on breaking our sequence of premierships, knocked Collingwood's system to smithereens.

What Frank Gill did to me was a glorious sight for Carlton barrackers, but my sense of humor did not allow me to enjoy myself much that afternoon as I muddled the few opportunities I had. Team mates were going down like ninepins. Nothing Collingwood tried could stem the tide. Ellingsen allowed the game to run on, thinking that the pace would slacken. Before that happened Carlton had the game in their grasp.

Their team work was wonderful, and their accuracy throughout was demoralising. At half time the board showed them 8-1 to Collingwood's 1-9. The final scores were Carlton 20-10 to our 5-12. A terrible drubbing for a team that had won the premiership for the four years prior to that season.

Carlton kicked 9-7 to Collingwood's 1-1 in the last term. This indicates how feeble the Magpies were.

Bumped Magpies Out Of It

Naturally there was a reason for such a debacle. And the reason was Carlton. The heavy men in the Carlton side simply bumped Collingwood out of the game. Froude was limping within a few minutes of the start, while Harry Collier left the field sick and sorry after a collision. Don Harris was crippled, and Dibbs was practically useless after the first quarter. He was game to stick it out as he did.

Three others in our side remained on the field when they should have been receiving attention. In fact the side was hammered flat.

Not only was it one of the worst defeats I recall being inflicted on Collingwood, but the roughest sea the Collingwood fleet ever sailed in. A crowd of 52,000 paid £2465 to see us get hammered down like tacks; they seemed to enjoy it more than any of the Collingwood players. The result was a triumph for Dan Minogue, who was coach, and Colin Martyn, who captained the side.

While my light was being dimmed, Harry Vallence was kicking goals from everywhere. He notched nine goals to set up a record for finals. Carlton men to shine out that day were Micky Crisp and Horrie Clover. Ably backed by every man in the side, they gave wonderful exhibitions of how the code should be played.

It was one of those rare occasions when a team whacked hard and still played football.

I have every reason for remembering that semi-final as the roughest game in which I played while with the Victorian Football League.

Every meeting between Carlton and Collingwood could be relied on for a certain amount of fireworks. It was so all the years I played. At times the umpires and tribunal had their say, but, strange as it may seem, there is not a man who has played for Carlton in my time with whom I am not friendly.

NEXT WEEK: Champions Across the Centre.

AS I SEE THE GAME

By Rod McGregor

FOOTBALL in V.F.L. ranks this season is not up to the standard of 1936 or 1937. The sudden exodus of stars, either by retirement, transfer or injury, has depleted some clubs almost beyond recognition and made the demand greater than the supply. Football will come back, but its restoration can be hastened by better methods.

IN the present season, stars are at a premium. Gaps in the ranks have caused team systems and attractive methods of play to fall below par. While there always is a percentage loss of players by reason of the fact that they have reached the age of retirement, the recent depletion in the ranks of V.F.L. teams has been so sudden as to be almost unprecedented.

Practically two first-class teams have been removed from metropolitan arenas. Of these, a great number have represented the State, and it is safe to say that a representative team of the highest quality could be chosen from the missing. This is indeed a blow to quality football and the game will have to mark time for a period to allow the younger generation to catch up.

South Melbourne and Richmond have been the hardest hit. These two teams have lost between them the equivalent of a first-class 18.

When we come to consider Bunton Shea, Coventry, Pratt, Hardiman, Nash, Metherell, Ogden, Robertson, Hillis, J. Evans, Reid and many others who were recognised as champions in their respective positions, it is no wonder that methods of play brought to perfection by these players break down in less experienced hands.

This departure of champions in the short space of two years has swept through League football like a forest fire and relatively has left its scars on the game. Football lovers must be patient until new growth appears.

Protect The Assets

Youth must get its growth, and while there is no absolute remedy for such a situation, some alleviation may be gained, and the term of apprenticeship to experience shortened, by careful instruction and strict training. The means by which maturity may be quickened without the loss of proficiency should be a study.

So many young players skip from stepping stone to stepping stone sure of foot at their first eager entry into the game. Given a fine day and the ball at their feet they are champions; but when they are confronted with a wet day, a choppy wind or a cunning opponent, their stride shortens and they flounder in the intervening bog. They learn that there are more things in football than ever they dreamed of. They flounder, perhaps, to a place in the second eighteen—so much good material wasted—and all for the want of a little patience and proper instruction on the part of their teachers. It is a pity.

Youthful enthusiasm and dash are assets to football. Much of this can be harnessed and taught to protect itself by proper instruction. This is indeed a study —the teaching of a player how to protect the things he can do well against the time when the opportunity comes to do them.

This situation is not new in football. Its history is largely bound up in rehabilitation—the new, rising to be equal or superior to the old. But the means by which past rehabilitation was accomplished should be a guide to quicken production.

A Bit Both Ways

Football means money to both parties and there is equal responsibility between club and player. The player should be as eager to learn as he is to play, while on the part of the club there should be a show of patience towards a final gain rather than a greed for immediate results. Proper co-operation will pay both; but here arise the inevitable questions: Are young players getting the right instruction? Is proper patience being exercised?

The answer is both yes and no. In some clubs players are getting the right instruction and club spirit is being fostered in the right way. In others vision is obscured in a scramble for immediate results.

A bad game means failure and a potential champion today is on the scrap-heap tomorrow. For a young player that is an unfortunate and short-sighted policy. I can well remember that my first few games were not impressive, but fortunately I struck a good one early. Perhaps we had better judges then, but that one game carried me until I got balance and I never missed another one afterwards except through injury.

However, to come up to date and speak candidly, I would like to see young Cartwright and A. Albiston back in the Hawthorn team. After their early showing, and particularly that of Cartwright in the matches against Carlton, Melbourne and Collingwood—a most severe test — I thought Hawthorn had material there well worth sticking to. If this team has replacements of a higher grade, then they are well off for recruits.

Apart from the Hawthorn view, which is entirely their own affair, I claim that there is a place in League football for these two young players. I use this merely as a case in point without attempting to look up all the missing who showed good early form.

An All-In Job

Football has suffered a sudden and severe loss and it is going to be an all-in job to fill the gaps. A review of the present position must convince clubs that quality football is merely keeping its end up. They must see also that the responsibility of keeping their own game at top level is theirs. This can only be done by a careful scrutiny of the material at hand and an avoidance of waste through hurried judgment.

I look to careful instruction as the quickest and best method of closing the breaches in the ranks, restoring the tone of the game and keeping returns constant.

We may not, for the moment, see the football we have been used to seeing. That can hardly be expected in view of the direct loss to football through so many champions going out of the game at once.

I believe, however, that public patience will support clubs that show competence, and if the best means of producing quality football are not sacrificed to the mad scramble for immediate results youth will quickly get its growth and football history repeat itself.

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Gordon Coventry Discusses

Great Centre Line Men

The centre lines of the various League clubs have changed hundreds of times during the 18 years Gordon Coventry played for Collingwood. He recalls them all when reviewing the champions across the centre.

Alan Geddes gets pride of place in Coventry's estimation as the best player of his time among wingmen, while Alan Hopkins was his ideal as a centre player.

Alan Hopkins

Alan Geddes

By GORDON COVENTRY, as told to J. M. Rohan

ALAN GEDDES, the solid little Richmondite, held onlookers and opponents spellbound for years with his delightful football. He was so reliable, Tigers played out to his flank, and he seldom failed them.

Of the hundreds of footballers I have seen on the wings I would say none could control a ball better than Geddes, or dispose of it so surely. His two-way turn was marvellous; his baulk was a clever trick.

Always cool and collected in a crisis was Geddes. He never appeared to be in a hurry. A forward leading out to him could not fail to appreciate the manner in which he shot the ball, chest high, to the side that put the opposition player at a disadvantage.

Geddes definitely spoon-fed his forwards. I know a number of football enthusiasts who would back me up when I say that the plucky little Tiger won many games for Richmond. His second name was consistency.

My old team mate, Bill Twomey, Stawell Gift winner, and perhaps the fastest flanker the game has seen, is my No. 2. Twomey did not have a good turn; he relied on speed, with a tricky stagger, to elude opponents.

Passes Like Cannon Balls

He took some spectacular high marks, and his drop-kick passes were like cannon balls.

With all his pace he was just as much at home on a wet day as on a dry day.

Collingwood players just wanted to see Twomey get a break on his man and they banged the ball out in front of him.

His prowess was recognised beyond the borders of Victoria; he represented the State more than once.

Bill is one of the marathon type. He played many years in country centres after leaving Collingwood and many a junior throughout Victoria can thank Bill Twomey for putting him wise to some of the finer points of the game.

Chasing Twomey at practice in the hope of grabbing his guernsey was the most futile thing I ever attempted at Collingwood.

Smallhorn, of Fitzroy, I consider an ideal type of wingman. Although he roams about a bit, I would forgive him as he is always in the fray.

With me he ranks high as a great fighter for his side. He has a run like "Tich" Shorten. With long strides, he never appears to be going fast, but few could put a hand on him.

Smallhorn marks excellently. His kicking for one of his size is brilliant.

South Melbourne have on the wing one of the game's best natural footballers—Herbie Matthews. He seems to have the strength to fill the bill as a follower if required.

Alan La Fontaine, an efficient centre.

I saw Wartman win a match for Melbourne against Collingwood in practically a lone hand effort. He called the tune all day. Several changes were made by Collingwood, In an attempt to stop him, but without avail.

"Watch Wartman," would be a good slogan for teams opposed to the Red Legs.

A crowd pleaser is Randall, Hawthorn's wiry little wingman, who plays spectacular football, making most of the opportunities coming his way. Randall sees the hardest game out to the bitter end. His marking and kicking are envied by many bigger men.

When a wingman for Footscray, Ivan McAlpine played some dazzling games. He is above the average size for the wing, but with pace, craftiness and football brains, he had many opponents on their toes while trying to keep him in check.

There are few headier players in the League than McAlpine.

do the right thing automatically. You could almost describe him as a freak mark.

Literally speaking, he could turn on a threepenny bit with baffling results to anyone chasing him

I would say that Matthews is endowed with more than his share of football brains. A grand player.

Impetuosity Was His Downfall

South had another player, Jim Reid, who could have been anything had he stayed in Victoria for another season or two.

Never in my long association with the game have I seen a player run so far, and so fast, with a football. If it had been possible to curb his impetuosity he could have been the star winger of all time.

No doubt he contracted his tearaway tactics through being a rugby player in his youth.

Reid pulled down some phenomenal marks. His drop-kicks on the run were equal to those of Austin Robertson

One of Essendon's mosquito fleet, Jack Garden, ranks with the top-liners of my time. He had the cleverness of Geddes, but more pace than the Richmond man. His passing to forwards could not be surpassed. He went out of the game too soon, preferring the juniors to the seniors.

A comparative junior, Slack, of Geelong, measures up to my idea of what a wingman should be. He has all the essentials, being strong, pacy and tricky, with good turns and football brains. He *s a type that will be right there at the end of a hard game. Already I have seen him up against good men; he has more than held his own.*

Slack finishes off his work like a tradesman, and is one of the best of the young school.

Collingwood have a diminutive magpie who has been a tower of strength—Jack Carmody—a wonderful little fighter who is never beaten. He kicks drops on the run with deadly accuracy.

Men on the Collingwood forward line appreciate the little chap's worth.

Marked Over Pack Like Dick Lee

Carmody has that bit of football devil necessary in the make-up of champions. He is a little match-winner whose position on the wing is a permanency.

To pass over the name of Drummond, an old Collingwood wingman, would be an admission that I didn't know a footballer. He played for Victoria, being a remarkable mark for one so short; he could mark over a pack like Dick Lee.

Drummond was not fast; in fact I don't know of any other who had less pace and played on a flank. But he had a trick that compensated for his lack of pace. When grabbed, he could twist out of an opponent's hands like a shot and get away.

Never did he miss his kick, and all of them went in the right direction.

Charlie Cameron gave some wonderful games to North Melbourne on the wing.

Carter, North's present champion, is fast arriving at Cameron's standard. Carter is the type who would go through a brick wall to get the ball; and he knows what to do with it, too, when he gets it.

Exceptionally fast, he kicks with either foot. Already he has severely trounced some of the good wingmen of the day. In a side that could not be regarded as strong, he has done a grand job.

Melbourne have in Ray Wartman a player who might attain the highest honors as a flanker. Endowed with height, weight and pace, he has a natural style, wonderful anticipation and baulk is the most successful I've seen; he gets away with it every time.

One who played several games against Fitzroy could not fail to note the solid effectiveness of Len Stott. Len did not go in for showy tactics, but was a straight-ahead player who made many opportunities and few mistakes for his side.

In Barney Carr, St. Kilda had one of the most dashing centremen I have seen.

"Bandy Legs," of Footscray

Now let us have a look back at the centre players of my time. My choice goes without hesitation to "Bandy Legs." Surely you know whom I mean? Why Alan Hopkins, for years the star turn at Footscray. Hopkins will be passed over in this story as I will deal with him later when discussing the best players of my time.

Then comes the man who played centre and captained Carlton for some years—Colin Martyn. He was a fine exponent of the game who never wasted a kick. He played effortlessly, with the grace of a ballet dancer and the deadly accuracy of a King's Prize winner.

Martyn played football as the founders of the game wanted it to be played.

The forward line of Carlton, in Martyn's time, were given many opportunities. It isn't any fault of his that there is a dearth of pennants at Carlton.

Patience, now, you Tiger barrackers. I haven't forgotten Eric Zschech. Who could fail to admire the co-operation between Jack Titus and Zschech? There was nothing showy about the Richmond centre player, yet he was a match-winner.

W. Smallhorn, an ideal type.

He appeared to be merely strolling along, but no one seemed able to get near him. His long drop kicks were a sickening sight to opposition back lines.

Zschech seemed to be able to overcome all schemes formulated to put him off his game.

A similar type to Zschech was Jack Beveridge, who played for many seasons with me at Collingwood. Jack was a roamer, but was such a good player that Collingwood tolerated his roaming.

He was handball champion of Victoria, and was a champion handballer on the football field.

We, at Collingwood, all practised handball with Beveridge so that we would not be left lamenting on the field. He could flick a ball to you like a flash.

Len Thomas, of South Melbourne, always impressed me as a centre man. His strong dashes and accurate passes to a comrade were poetry in football.

He was one of the fastest men off the mark I saw in the League.

Great Help to Pratt

An excellent mark was he, and he was responsible for many of Bob Pratt's goals during that forward's successful years. Thomas was a tradesman who inherited all of his father's cleverness as a footballer.

Alan La Fontaine plays football with less effort than any other player in the League today. He makes a hard match look like a game of ludo. Alan plays with his head, as well as his feet. His

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Next Association Games

Prahran v. Port Melbourne
Northcote v. Preston
Sandringham v. Brighton
Coburg v. Brunswick
Williamstown v. Yarraville
Oakleigh v. Camberwell

League Changes

F'SCRAY MOVE UP AGAIN

Footscray replied to their critics who had seen them shape so badly against Carlton on Monday by thrashing Collingwood in the Victorian League games on Saturday.

Essendon gave Richmond more than a fright. They were beaten only with the last kick of the day. Carlton, Geelong and Melbourne, who had easy wins, seem assured of places in the finals. The fourth place is open.

FOOTSCRAY were robbed once again by poor forward work of reward they justly earned further afield. They were four to five goals a better team than Collingwood.

The Magpies are in a sorry plight. Their small men, so long the bane of opposing teams, are right out of face without the support of strong big men.

Collingwood are on the way out, unless they can improve their rucks and their driving forces. They are still tenacious, still game, but the strong ruck work, supported by those fast moving midgets, is missing.

Footscray were brilliant in some of their work, but the lack of a forward plan was ruinous.

Neither Richmond nor Essendon are teams possessed of 18 players of League standard. Their meeting at Richmond was all in favor of Essendon till a shower of rain, late in the game, seemed to revive the Tigers. The game then went with the bounce of the ball, which was strangely always the way of the waiting Tigers. Essendon faded and Richmond romping on won by five points.

Carlton coasted along against North Melbourne, always a little the better side, yet always making it a game.

Geelong gradually ran Hawthorn to earth and were so far ahead in [illegible]

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Gordon Coventry Names

CHAMPION OF HIS TIME

Why Bunton Is Not Named In First Six Players

If it takes a champion to know a champion then Gordon Coventry is a fit and proper person to review the great footballers of last twenty years. Coventry is an ardent admirer of anyone who could play football. They do not require a black and white guernsey to win recognition from the prince of goalkickers. Naming the champions as he saw them he places them in this order:

Warne-Smith, 1; Colin Watson, 2; Syd Coventry, 3; Alan Hopkins, 4; Dick Reynolds, 5; Laurie Nash, 6.

Coventry explains in this story why the triple Brownlow medallist, Haydn Bunton, is not included in his best six players of the last two decades.

By Gordon Coventry
as told to J. M. Rohan

IN the last 20 years many sterling footballers have played the Australian code. The task of classifying them is one that could lead to endless argument without getting anywhere in the long run. It seems to be an accepted fact, however, that any footballer retiring after long service should look down the long lane of memory to tell of the champions of his time. I am acceding to a request when I give my opinion on the best player I saw during my 18 years with Collingwood. You may differ from me, but we are all entitled to our opinions. My placings may lead to many arguments on the game and the players, but healthy argument is good for us all.

Public enemy No. 1 to all other League clubs than Melbourne was Ivor Warne-Smith, holder of two Brownlow medals, which he earned over and over again. He was definitely the best footballer I saw playing the game in my time.

Warne-Smith was a footballer in every sense of the word. He could play in any position on the field, and had to do so more than once. It mattered not to him whether he was placed back, forward, following, roving, in the centre or on the wing. He could play a champion's part anywhere.

He Didn't Mind The Weather

Weather conditions didn't matter a bit; he said it was a winter game and those playing it should adapt themselves to wintry conditions. Warne-Smith could do that as few players could.

The opposition never worried the famous Red-leg Digger. If his team failed to win a game he was satisfied as long as they played, showing some football sense.

An opposing side had to be on the jump to counter the moves of Melbourne when Warne Smith was in charge of the side.

Though smaller than most followers, Warne-Smith was a tower of strength in the packs. He was tireless. His judgment in hitting out and going for marks were faultless.

He brought down enough marks in his time to be described as a high mark, and his excellent kicking, with either foot, was good to see. Either way he could turn, which was a problem the big men of other teams could not counter. He was really a follower with the agility of a rover.

To all appearances Smithy was not fast, but he was always thereabouts when the ball was thrown-in, bounced or kicked off. He had no superior as a shepherder.

At handball he was an adept. If he wanted to swing a game to the other wing he did so with the audaciousness of a bushranger.

Warne-Smith went off the ball to rest where the fight was thickest. He never played the man, but could be depended on to hold his own in the heaviest of clashes. A day's football for him was indeed a busy one. He had football brains and he used them. He was a football dictator—a Mussolini and Hitler rolled into one—but his "dictating" was carried out in actions, not words.

My No. 1 footballer was an inspiring player. If 36 Warne-Smiths could be fielded, wouldn't we see some football?

I first saw the skill of Warne-Smith when Collingwood played a team at Latrobe, Tasmania, in 1922. He was the best man on the ground.

Many overtures had been made to him to come to Melbourne.

Collingwood players and officials predicted a future for him in big football. I've never heard any of them say he didn't come up to expectations.

Warne-Smith was a great club man and a true sport. If there was anything missing in him that a champion should have, I never noticed it.

From Ruck To Wing

Colin Watson, who ranks No. 2 on my list, was moulded something like Warne-Smith, but, if anything a bit more compact. He was another who could fill any position on the field.

I have seen him drop out of the ruck to take the place of an injured wingman!

A tireless worker and a great fighter for his side, he was of the type that expends every ounce of energy. He never let up for a moment. It was his style to keep the pressure on all the time, even in practice matches.

Colin Watson's dash and grand kicking were features that attracted many to see him play. For his size he was robust, and he never dodged an issue with bigger men.

I would class Watson as one of the quickest thinkers I knew. Many of his moves scored goals for his side before opposing captains woke up.

A football genius, worthy of being rated right up near the top was Watson.

My brother Syd ranked little short of the two I have already mentioned. He did not have Watson's pace, but he was seldom beaten in a dash for the ball. He had strength above the average and went into crushes with abandon. He knew how to use his strength better than most of the big men; he used it fairly and in accordance with the rules of the game.

Syd's trick of approaching a player while he held the ball on the palm of one hand was amusing, but mighty effective. He had determination that inspired our team. A few words from him, if we were not shaping like winners, usually had the desired effect.

There were times when Syd literally carried Collingwood in the ruck. His old associates dropped out as the years rolled on and he was mainly responsible for teaching young Magpies how to become followers.

When following, Syd seldom crossed the half-forward line. He seemed to be able to create the loose man about the centre, and it will be remembered that he got thousands of kicks in that region when on and off the ball.

Ivor Warne-Smith

Colin Watson

It was invariably left to him to slow up the big men of other sides.

He never asked his men to do a job he wouldn't do himself. He shepherded the midgets of Collingwood in a manner that won him reverence and loyalty from all members of the team.

If Sydney had been able to kick with both feet like Warne-Smith and Colin Watson, I would have moved him up a peg on my list of champions.

No one could have packed more consistency into 13 years' League football than Syd. In addition to leading Collingwood, he captained Victoria in interstate and carnival matches. His teams did not suffer a single defeat in any of those games. He insisted on those selected doing the job first, and playing afterwards.

I consider him a most worthy candidate for third place on my honor board of champions.

Have you ever heard of the little Footscray fellow with the bandy legs? Alan Hopkins is his name. He got tired of being named as runner-up for the Brownlow medal. I never saw anyone who looked less like a footballer unless it was myself. He had bandy legs and I was pigeon toed.

Hopkins was the shining star in a weak side. What he couldn't do with a football wasn't worth doing. He played mostly in the centre for Footscray, but could have held down any post allotted him.

Any of the key positions would not have worried him, while roving, wing play or kicking goals was child's play to him.

Hopkins was one of the few players who could take a mark on the run and go on without losing a stride. The game has never known a better stab kick. His accuracy, with those bandy legs, was a treat to watch.

Often players of my side were heard to ask what Footscray would have scored if the forwards had made the best of the opportunities which Hopkins gave them.

I have seen Hopkins, on more than one occasion, running into the open as he looked for someone to make position. He has often had to go straight for goals to have a shot himself. A player of his standard would sooner have passed it on, but at times he had little support.

Hopkins ran close to the ground and turned like a hare. He could avoid trouble with ease and grace.

In one carnival series Hopkins was played wing half-forward. He bombarded me from all angles with passes that never rose higher than the chest. Taking passes from him was as easy as taking candy from a kid.

His was the best exhibition of half-forward play I have seen in interstate or carnival football. He can take the credit for the majority of the goals I got in that series.

Hopkins was one of the few natural footballers I saw, and I never saw him beaten.

A Star In Any Side

Now for one of recent vintage—Dick Reynolds, Essendon's star. Two Brownlow medals are evidence of his prowess in the field. In a weak side, he stands out, but he would be a star in any League club. He plays the ball all the time, working his brains overtime. Though not a strong type, he is wiry, and for his size he is a grand mark and kick.

Glorious is the only word that describes his two-way turn which invariably opens up the game.

Dick likes it fast and open. He proves his versatility daily by roving or playing on the wings, jobs he is most suited for. But I recall the day he did a job at centre half-forward against Collingwood that stamped him as a champion.

His play is clean. Sly and shady tricks are unknown to him. The game could do with more of his type. It will not surprise me if he finishes his football career with more Brownlow medals than any other player.

Laurie Nash is not far behind the men I have named. I could not name many who had so many outstanding qualities. He was a sensational mark in his best years with South Melbourne. He had the safest pair of hands imaginable, while his turn right or left, as he came down with the ball was someting opponents couldn't combat.

Nash was a deadly goal-kicker. If he had been played permanently as full forward he would have outshone all full forwards of my time, including myself.

His performance in kicking 18 goals against South Australia was the dandiest I have witnessed.

Nash could hold down the centre half-forward, centre half-back, and other key positions with the skill of a champion. He was not long enough in the League to take the honors away from the men I have mentioned in front of him.

Too Great An Individualist

Now you want to know why Haydn Bunton missed out in my first six League players of the last 20 years!

I couldn't give ranking to a player who didn't know the first thing about drop-kicking or disposal of the ball. So much can be done by bad disposal that good play is nullified.

Haydn won plaudits from the crowd for his brilliance, but key position men in his side could be heard lamenting. He often disorganised his team through his individualism; a dangerous and disturbing thing to do, and one that would not be tolerated in all clubs.

Bunton failed dismally in that important phase of football—passing. He attempted to do too much.

It may seem strange to readers that a triple Brownlow medallist should miss

Syd Coventry

out with me, but I was looking for faults, whereas umpires were impressed with his dazzling brilliance.

I will say this—no player I have seen was superior to him physically. He had perfect balance, was a glorious exponent of handball, and had a zig-zag run that got him out of many a jam. He could juggle a ball as though on a string, while his marking was safe.

Bunton could play all day, and then start all over again. Had he been at Collingwood he would have been made to share the roving; and while resting in a forward pocket he would have had enough to keep him busy. He would have given better service to his team if he had been nailed down to something definite.

Coached in passing, and taught the meaning of team-work, Bunton could have been the greatest player the code has known.

Anyhow, the majority of football fans like the individualist, and Bunton therefore gets the highest honors for being the greatest crowd-pleaser of my time.

(NEXT WEEK: When one player won a premiership for Collingwood.)

AS I SEE THE GAME

By ROD McGREGOR

THE Magpies are staging a comeback. The soundness of their football on Saturday indicates further success.

Look to Collingwood as the big influence in deciding the final placings!

ADMITTEDLY Collingwood have had a bad run, but their display on Saturday emphasises the fact that they have recuperative powers equal to those of the proverbial cat. The team are now uniformly in better "nick," and they have the uncanny knack of getting the best out of even moderate players.

We can say of Collingwood that they stick closer to football principles than any other League club. There is no stunting and they keep persisting with proper methods until action becomes almost automatic.

Visualise what this means in a crisis—this ability to do the right thing automatically when you have hardly a kick left, and you'll realise more fully the secret of Collingwood's unexpected successes.

We can learn from the Magpies many valuable lessons in style of play that will go a long way to keeping the Australian game on the map. Like the bird from which they are named they have the quality of fighting to the last feather.

Their win on Saturday has lengthened the list of possibles for the "four," and has done football a good turn in throwing into their remaining games a fresh interest. It is a great time to start a run, and if Collingwood can maintain Saturday's form they are going to be more than a nuisance to teams trying to hold position and will, in my opinion, be the deciding factor in determining the leading two at the end of this round.

Throw-in Is Faster

I HAD a good look at the old throw in from the boundary last Saturday week, and was back again on Saturday last looking at its substitute. I am satisfied that the modern method of giving the free kick for technical offences on the boundary is slower all round. I put the watch on it to test it out in the Geelong-Collingwood game, and found the free kick about 7sec. slower on the average.

Too much time is wasted in deciding who is to get the free kick and more is added to it by the player himself waiting until his mates are in position. While this is not actually all "time off" it is a longer stoppage in the play that is to the disadvantage of the fast team.

The fault in principle is that the player has the right of deciding when and how the ball shall come into play when this is purely the function of the umpire, either field or boundary. With the boundary umpire putting the ball into play whethere is anyone there or not there is less interruption in the continuity of the play.

If the old throw in were brought back the followers of today would have to pull up their socks and train in earnest. Followers used to be long-distance men, and had to train accordingly to get the necessary stamina.

Today they train like placed men and it is no wonder that they often blow out just when they are wanted most. A better game with less congestion and a better type of athlete would eventuate if our old friend the "throw in" were re-introduced.

This Holding Puzzle

I must admit frankly that I am puzzled. I cannot see for the player a way out of the new twist that has been given to the holding-the-ball rule. Naturally, I assume that a player has to take the ball into his hands to hold it; but I find that the latest interpretation defines a player as holding the ball if he gets nearer than two feet from it and merely gazes at it without even touching it.

The same applies to the player who, in dashing through, knocks the ball ahead and keeps it rolling. Leaving out the player who has had the ball and dropped it, or who is bouncing it in running, I have seen instances every Saturday of penalties for holding being inflicted on players who have not even touched the ball.

All umpires interpret the rule this way.

Not having picked it up, he cannot drop it, neither can he handball it as the rule instructs. If you force him to kick off the ground he often has to kick the wrong way or out of bounds.

What I want to know is when a player gets first to the ball, but is afraid to pick it up for fear he will be caught, and is then free kicked for standing and admiring it, what must he do to avoid a penalty for getting there first?

The only solution I can see is that he should do the ridiculous thing and walk away as if he were not interested. His team probably would then tell him to keep on walking.

The pin-pricks of this rule could be eliminated if we said "first come, first served," and then gave the player a reasonable chance to get rid of the ball.

South Te[illegible]

Gordon Coventry Tells How

One Man Won a Premiership

By GORDON COVENTRY as told to J. M. Rohan

Everybody realises that the first essential of clubs aspiring to premiership honors is team work. To claim that one individual won a premiership will be hard for readers to reconcile with the team work argument, but champion goalkicker Gordon Coventry makes this claim on behalf of his old comrade, Percy Rowe.

Collingwood had run into a bad patch and had all the luck in the world to win through to the 1928 final. They had to meet Richmond, who were firm favorites. Collingwood had to think hard. A plan was adopted with Rowe playing the part of heavy villain. "He won the pennant for Collingwood lone handed," says Coventry.

NO one knows the value of team work better than I do. The wonderful team work of Collingwood for all the years I was with the club gave me the opportunities that resulted in my getting my goals.

Yet despite that admission, I give the credit to one individual for winning a match—and an important one at that. It was the premiership of 1928.

[illegible] of Collingwood that day would have been wasted only for the herculean task Rowe performed. No player in that side will differ from me when I say that Rowe gave the finest match-winning effort ever seen. He made victory possible for Collingwood by staging one of the grandest exhibitions of shepherding.

No Counter

It was a surprise move that the Tigers had no counter for. It came about this way. Collingwood slumped badly at the end of the 1928 home and home matches. Players seemed to have gone stale. And I was the worst of the bunch. I was failing to play my part, and it was more good luck than good play that kept the Magpies in the running.

I had 'flu coming on me when Collingwood played Melbourne in the second semi-final. I scarcely got a touch all day. The game was one of those scrambling ones that was not helped by the weather conditions. Perhaps the result was the most satisfactory under the circumstances, as everyone seemed happy when the score board showed points level at the final bell. It was a near thing, and I thought Warne-Smith's men should have won the day.

Drawn games are rare in semi-finals. The replay attracted a large crowd, but again a disappointing game was provided.

I was as weak as a kitten and should not have been playing. I missed chance after chance, while I was just swept off my feet in the crushes. The final bell was music to me that day, and I could not take any credit for Collingwood winning by four points. Again they were lucky.

Our two fluky games against Melbourne gave us the right to challenge if beaten by Richmond in the final. The challenge was not necessary. Collingwood held a council of war and decided that they could outplay the Tigers.

It was only a matter of my being able to kick goals to bring victory, said the wise men of the club. After training on the Thursday before the final I reported myself as feeling much better. It would not have surprised me had I been dropped, but all chance of being an onlooker disappeared when Percy Rowe had his say.

"No One Will Touch Him All Day"

"Allow me to play in a forward pocket alongside 'Nuts' and I'll guarantee no one lays a finger on him all day," said Rowe with enough aggressiveness to carry conviction. Rowe was a man of few words, and one of the strongest players I have known.

It was agreed that all should bang the ball on to me no matter how I was hemmed in. I was wondering how it would work out. It certainly looked all right on paper.

Disposing of Carlton, Richmond were firm favorites for the final. The light rain that fell did not keep 50,000 from seeing the match, which was a football thriller. As we were going out on to the ground Rowe trotted with me and said.

"'Nuts,' if you don't break the record for goals kicked in a final I won't speak to you again."

"I guess the Richmond backline will have a say," was my rejoinder. "When I'm finished with the Richmond backs they will be wondering what fell on them," was the last I heard from Rowe before the ball was bounced.

From then on till the end of the first quarter I wondered how it was that I had taken several marks without [illegible] Rowe told me that Rowe was making some awful faces behind my back, and that the Tigers didn't like it. It was the same in the second, third and final quarters. I kicked nine goals to break the League record to that time, and never finished a game so fresh.

At the half-time interval I saw that Rowe was black and blue. I realised that he was doing the work of a trojan as I was leading out and going up for marks. And he was opposed to some husky young fellows, Jack Bisset, George Rudolph and Donald Don were a few of the players he blocked and bumped every time they tried to get near me.

Rowe ignored the ball all through, devoting his time and energy to make my task a sinecure. He did the work of two men. He disorganised the Richmond backline all day. By stepping in front of a man, or bumping him, my movements were unhampered. And with one sore shoulder, Rowe had to manoeuvre for position before tackling the Tigers.

The more frayed the tempers of Richmond backmen became, the more Rowe grinned.

Percy Rowe, whose generalship left Gordon Coventry a clear passage to the ball which enabled Collingwood to win.

To tell readers of another sensational game between Colling[illegible]ood and Richmond I have to go back to the previous year—1927—when the Tigers were runners-up to Collingwood. It was in the grand final. The match was played under the worst weather conditions imaginable. It could easily have been mistaken for a game under Soccer rules.

It is not likely that a grand final will ever be played with the end showing such low scores. Collingwood scored 2.13, while the Tigers puddled through to finish with but 1.7.

Fancy an aggregate of 38 points for two good teams in a game played since the alteration of the out-of-bounds rule which has tended to help sides to get three-figure scores!

In kicking all of Collingwood's goals in that historic game—the whole two of them—I derived a great deal of pleasure.

Most Sensational [illegible]

[illegible] kicked while playing for Collingwood. I was running with the ball away from goal. Trying to get a turn in before kicking my feet slid forward from under me.

As I was just about measuring my length in the mud I kicked the ball over my shoulder. It went through the posts, to the joy of my teammates and disgust of the Tigers. It was my most sensational fluke.

Players went out that afternoon wearing two guernseys. It was not many minutes before we were all drenched to the skin. A biting cold wind had all nearly frozen; even the followers failed to work up circulation.

Poor little Jack McMurray's spotless white uniform looked like a bit of dirty washing before the game had been in progress a minute. It was hard to distinguish him from the midgets on each side as he splashed through mud and water. At half time our uniforms were taken off and wrung out.

Boots were soaked until they were so soft that they could have been wrung out like socks. And the only thing that saved us from shivering to death during the interval was an issue of whisky and milk.

Players coated themselves in oil hoping to keep out the wet and cold. The wet and greasy conditions made for congested play, and as could be expected, congestion led to a few fists flying. It was easily the worst conditions I have seen the code played under. I would not like it over again.

As I said before, it is not likely that we will ever see a League game finish with such low scores. In fact, you could bet with certainty that no teams playing under present day rules could score so few goals if kicking blindfolded. Men who played in that game must shudder when they recall the quarter scores, which were:—

Richmond, 0-1, 0-4, 0-7, 1-7—13 Pts.
Collingwood, 0-1, 2-6, 2-9, 2-13, 25 Pts.

Rowe's lone-hand effort that won Collingwood the 1928 premiership and the grand final against the same team which ended with record low scores, will remain in my thoughts for ever. They were epic games that no participant could ever forget.

(NEXT WEEK: Good Half-Forwards.)

Why Pass Bunton?

IN last Wednesday's edition of Sporting Globe I wrote League footballer Australia has ever witnessed. This is due to his brain-work ability, and the unquestionable fairness with which he plays.

Gordon Coventry stated that Bunton could not drop kick the ball, pass to a team mate, or co-operate with the team. As I have watched Bunton play nearly all his matches in the League, I feel justified in stating that Coventry is incorrect in these statements. Bunton was a good drop-kick, and used this kick frequently; but as he was a champion punt kick, he used the punt mostly.

Bunton was the master of hand-ball, and also his kicks always were to the advantage of his team. His co-operation with team-mates was perfect, but the inability of other players often spoiled his good work. The brilliant co-operation between Bunton and Smallhorn was wonderful to watch. His play in interstate games was probably even better than usual, because he had a team of first-class players to co-operate with.

Coventry mentioned the 17 goals kicked by Nash in an interstate game to be one of the finest efforts he has witnessed, but it should be remembered that the splendid play by Bunton was responsible for the accomplishment of this feat. I am sure that every fair-minded football enthusiast will agree with me when I state that Bunton is the finest footballer in the history of the Australian code.

AS I SEE THE GAME

By ROD McGREGOR

DISTRICT football has failed in its object.

It should be superseded by a plan more equitable to players as a whole, and less easily evaded.

THE scheme of district football was introduced originally to prevent trafficking in players and to guarantee each club a definite territory within the metropolitan area. The whole area was divided up and districts lay side by side with no intervening spaces. The plan had its good points, but broke down because it gave everything to the club and nothing to the player.

In its passage through various administrations it has become whittled down to a shadow of its former self. Territory has been reduced and the original area shot with parking spaces where a prospective player may reside without committing himself. This was of benefit to players but also presented numberless opportunities for evasion.

The bluff honesty of the original plan has been white-anted and riddled with holes to such an extent that a club scout with a fast motor car can drive right through it.

The proof of this lies in the fact that there is always some fresh angle to consider, some doubtful case up for a ruling and much difference of opinion on the correctness of the rulings given. As compared with its original intention the present application of district football is no more than a gesture to propriety.

Such is the baby that the present administration of the League has had handed down to it. They cannot be blamed for its introduction nor its distorted shape, but they assume responsibility when they permit it to exist.

Thin End Of Wedge

Hope for the future lies in the limitation of club lists. This is a shrewd blow at district football and one of the best ideas put forward for many years. With its introduction, a good opportunity might be seized to throw the district football encumbrance overboard and dispense with residential territory altogether.

It is unfair to players of the same club if one is bound by residential qualifications while another has the advantages to be gained by living in unallotted territory. There should be only one bar to transfer and that is a practical demonstration that the player's services are required. A proper application of list limits will give relief and justice to players that the district scheme often forbids.

If all territory were open some clubs would awaken to their responsibilities to local players. A club that fails to develop its locals and does not wake up to the fact that they exist until some other club discovers them, has no real claim.

There is a lot to be said for the club scout who hunts round and tries to give young men their chance. Rough justice demands that he is entitled to the results of his work and the young player equally entitled to his chance. To have enthusiasm damped by a casual reference to a residential clause by a club whose only interest is to "hold" the player concerned is not in the best interests of football. This is a great weakness in the district plan.

Not So Simple

It will be argued that all open territory will promote unlimited bidding. If we can believe all we hear neither the district scheme nor the Coulter Law has prevented it. Matters concerning the signing up of players could be simplified. Indiscriminate signing-up could be abolished as undesirable, and should not be accepted unless performed at the club offices.

The fact that the player would [illegible] officers in ground to contact the[illegible] of training purtheir proper [illegible]xcepted as the real evi[illegible] his intentions. It would give pomposity and ceremony to the proceedings that the advent of a League player demands. The player would not plead ignorance as he sometimes does when his signature is taken on a log 150 miles away.

I am not afraid either that the simple country player would be hoodwinked. The popular tale of this lad is not so heart-rending as some would have us believe. Anyone who has been mixed up with football administration, as I have, will tell you that the simple country lad is generally the shrewd member of the party.

He has had proportionately the greatest share of the plums and was primarily responsible for the introduction of the Coulter Law. Rather than be hampered by residential restrictions, the city player, for his own protection, should be given equal freedom.

I have no fears that an open territory policy would react dangerously. It would make straight-forward cases out of many that now appear doubtful.

Separate Council Needed

The job, however, is not a simple one. To readjust all the clauses governing the movements of players is a task that cannot be undertaken during the currency of the season. Here an independent committee not hampered by the hustle and bustle of club administration could be employed with good effect. This is another instance of the necessity of a separate body designed for the purpose of solving major problems in football, with a point of view embracing football as a whole and the time to do the job properly. This Greater Council, if I may so call it, would dictate the policy for the State and leave the actual work of carrying out to the respective administrations.

Sooner or later the League will have to pass on problems of this nature for adjustment. Club delegates have neither the time nor the freedom that the consideration of debatable measures demands.

Something should be done quickly with the district problem. Open territory and the limitation of lists would, in my opinion, do far more for the game than district football has ever done.

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Gordon Coventry Discusses

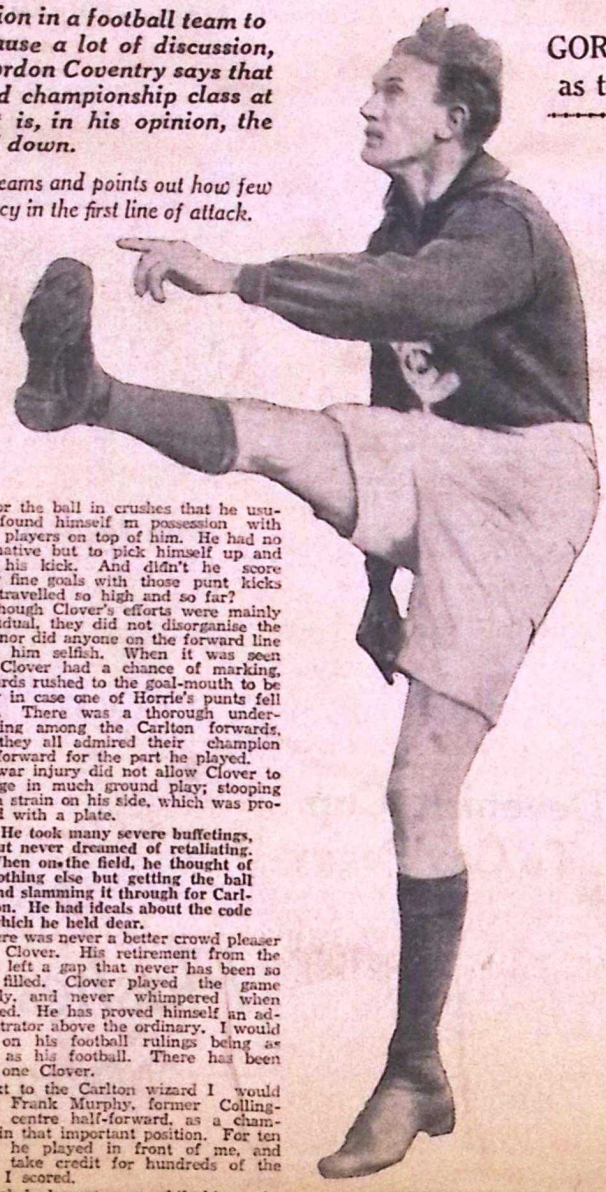
Star Half-Forwards

What is the hardest position in a football team to fill? That question will cause a lot of discussion, yet it is easy to answer. Gordon Coventry says that so few players have reached championship class at centre half-forward that it is, in his opinion, the hardest key position to hold down.

He reviews past and present teams and points out how few have been able to create permanency in the first line of attack.

In 18 years of League football Coventry saw many half-forwards striving for mastery. He thinks Horrie Clover, Carlton's champion of a few seasons back, the daddy of them all. In this story he deals with the methods of those who stood out.

By
GORDON COVENTRY
as told to J. M. Rohan



HORRIE CLOVER, "daddy of them all."

WHEN one tries to recall outstanding players of the League in the last 20 years, it is brought home forcibly how few have made history at centre half-forward.

Noted followers, rovers, centres, wingmen, forwards and backs there have been by the score, but you could count on the fingers of one hand the champions who have shone on the half-forward line, the first line of attack.

The reason why so few make names for themselves at centre half-forward is easy to explain. They are invariably opposed to the champion player of the opposition side—the centre half-back.

I could name half a dozen centre half-backs for every class centre half-forward. You might ask why there should be such a disparity; there again the answer is simple.

The back man gets possession, and has a straight-ahead job to do, while the centre half-forward has to turn, look for a team mate in position, and then pass the ball. While he is doing that there is a likelihood of the grandstand toppling down on him, or, next disastrous, the centre half-back playing a tattoo behind his ears.

Believe me, it is the hardest job in the world to find a good centre half-forward. That is why there have been so few of the excellence of Horrie Clover.

When I tell that Clover was not the type who fed forwards, it may be asked how he had claim to being the champion of my time, and, possibly, the greatest man at centre half-forward the game has known. Well, Clover was great because he was such an amazing mark and prodigious kick.

More Value Trying For Goal

He was of more value to his side when blazing away at goal from the half-forward line than in attempting a pass to forwards. Clover went so high in the air for the ball in crushes that he usually found himself in possession with some players on top of him. He had no alternative but to pick himself up and take his kick. And didn't he score many fine goals with those punt kicks that travelled so high and so far?

Although Clover's efforts were mainly individual, they did not disorganise the side, nor did anyone on the forward line think him selfish. When it was seen that Clover had a chance of marking, forwards rushed to the goal-mouth to be ready in case one of Horrie's punts fell short. There was a thorough understanding among the Carlton forwards, and they all admired their champion half-forward for the part he played.

A war injury did not allow Clover to indulge in much ground play; stooping was a strain on his side, which was protected with a plate.

He took many severe buffetings, but never dreamed of retaliating. When on the field, he thought of nothing else but getting the ball and slamming it through for Carlton. He had ideals about the code which he held dear.

There was never a better crowd pleaser than Clover. His retirement from the game left a gap that never has been so ably filled. Clover played the game cleanly, and never whimpered when crashed. He has proved himself an administrator above the ordinary. I would rely on his football rulings being as good as his football. There has been only one Clover.

Next to the Carlton wizard I would name Frank Murphy, former Collingwood centre half-forward, as a champion in that important position. For ten years he played in front of me, and could take credit for hundreds of the goals I scored.

Frank had great pace, while his marking was excellent. He could kick with either foot, passing with deadly accuracy. Whenever I saw he had a chance of getting the ball, I tore into the open and Murphy did the rest. For one so tall, he was a fine ground player, whose tenaciousness won him many kicks.

Tried In Many Positions

Like many other key position champions, he was tried out in many positions before gaining permanency at centre half-forward. Commencing at centre half-back, then at centre, and later as a follower, he was beginning to wonder what he could call himself when he got his chance at centre half-forward.

GORDON RATTRAY, whose torpedo punt never has been rivalled for distance and accuracy.

In that position he was a champion. Murphy helped me in all games when I scored big bags of goals. His grand marking was backed up by a quick get away that left opponents yards behind. He always seemed to be able to get balanced before he kicked, and I could rely on the ball going to a position that would allow me to take it with ease.

So even was the Collingwood combination in Murphy's time that no one appeared to stand out, but in any other team he would have been a shining star. I can just imagine what a scramble there would be today between the scouts of League clubs if a player of Frank Murphy's ability were on the auction block.

Murphy came from the Thornbury C.Y.M.S. He was the ideal club man, and, without a doubt, one of the most popular men who ever played for Collingwood.

Now for one of the sizzling types of footballers who are born, and not made. I am thinking of Jack Collins, of Geelong.

HE COULD TURN THE TIDE IN HIS TEAM'S FAVOR QUICKER THAN IT TAKES TO WRITE. A VERITABLE MATCH WINNER IS COLLINS, EVEN TODAY.

With freak marks that were pulled down from apparently impossible heights, Collins would streak out of the pack with the ball to give a baulk or turn that no one could counter. His teaming with Geelong's full-forward was always a football treat.

Ranks With Champions Of All Time

Collins was chock full of football devil, and the centre half-back who thought he was going to give Collins a rough time, and get away with it, was rudely awakened. Collins has given displays against Collingwood that have not been bettered. His telling kicks were in keeping with his general ability. He ranks with the champions of all time as a centre half-forward.

It was a positive treat to have Collins in front of me in some of the interstate and carnival games I played in.

At his best, he could hold down a place in the best team picked from all the States playing the code.

What a pity he dropped out of the game for a few years. Yet he is far from being a back number today.

I have seen Peter Reville pulled out of the ruck and spelled in the centre half-forward position. Certainly a nice position for resting a follower! I suppose it is only a freak footballer like Reville who could be expected to do a good job under such conditions.

Had Reville been played permanently at centre half-forward, he could have made football history. His running drop kicks were one of the delights of football. Many of them went sailing more than 60 yards through the centre. Nothing was beyond Reville on his day. His marking was as certain as that he would have one sock down round his ankle.

Reville could be described as the greatest playboy the League has known. He played a brand of football entirely his own, and many a cheer he won from the crowd for his dazzling bursts.

None could forget the play of Gordon Rattray when in his heyday with Fitzroy. He was a tower of strength to the Maroons. His handling of a ball was clever and sure. He had wonderful dash and his work was generally finished off with a torpedo punt, a kick at which he excelled.

Unrivalled for Distance and Accuracy

Many have copied Rattray's torpedo, but none have rivalled him for distance and accuracy with it. Rattray had to make a wide detour to get his kick. In that regard he could be likened to Roy Cazaly, Bunny Wittman and Jack Beveridge. Blazing away at goal from a long way out, Rattray had great success.

Beyond those named, it is hard to recall another centre half-forward who has held the position for any length of time. Wing half-forwards, of course, there have been in greater numbers.

When I think of the men who have played on the half-forward flanks in my time, I must give pride of place to Keith Shea, late of Carlton, who now is delighting the crowds in Western Australia.

Shea achieved greatness, although he can turn only one way. He has speed and beautiful balance. When leading into an opponent he can zig-zag in a disconcerting manner that always seems to give him an open paddock in which to deploy. He also marks and kicks gloriously. In fact, his kicking is one of the strongest features of his game.

Whether kicking to a comrade or to goal, Shea can be depended on to get the best results. He can get through a hard game with fewer mistakes than most footballers, being polished and artistic. Carlton certainly made a football find when they prevailed on Shea to come from Bacchus Marsh. The crowd likes the brand of football Shea provides.

Any League team having the luck to have a flanker of Shea's ability should be satisfied, but Carlton had the pleasure of having a champion on the other flank as well. "Micky" Crisp, now one of the Carlton veterans, is the man to whom I refer. Crisp has all the tricks known. He turns either way and kicks accurately with both feet. His speed is a factor in his success, as few opponents could pace it with him, while few can hold him in check in a tussle for the ball.

Has Football Brain

I consider some of the tussles I have seen between Harold Rumney and Crisp the finest I can recall. I'll wager Harry Vallence will never forget the part Crisp has played in getting the ball to him for many of his goals. Crisp lacks inches, but is solid. He was born with a football brain which he has developed to the highest degree.

I looked forward to the meetings of Melbourne and Collingwood in the days of "Bunny" Wittman. I consider he turned on some of the finest football treats. He wanted plenty of territory to work in, but his ability to elude opponents was remarkable.

His wide sweeping runs to get into position for left-foot kicks found him galloping like a racehorse, with beautiful action. He had a long stride, and few opponents ever got a grip on his guernsey once he got half a yard start on them.

Melbourne relied on Wittman, and invariably the Red Legs blazed the ball to his wing. He seldom failed to do the right thing. On his day Wittman could be described as deadly, and a sure match winner. His co-ordination with Dick Taylor was a highlight of football.

How many recall the time when Richmond played Jack Baggott at wing half-forward? I consider Baggott one of the finest exponents of the code.

He had brilliant pace and could handle a ball when at his top as few players could. His tearaway forward rushes and accurate passes to his forwards initiated many Tiger attacks, while he could get great distance with his kicks if forwards were covered by opponents.

Could Hold Down Any Position

He had to be juggled back and forward, but was artist enough to hold down any position like a tradesman. Jack had a clever baulk that got him out of trouble and deservedly won him much credit.

The two little half-forward flankers playing with Collingwood today rate up to any the Magpies have had in the last 20 years. They are the diminutive Vin Doherty and Des. Fothergill.

Doherty was a great help to me in my last years at Collingwood. He is the rubber ball type. His dash and pluck are not in keeping with his small frame. No 15-stoner goes into crushes more fearlessly than Doherty.

Doherty's kicking on the run with either foot is something I would never tire of praising. He can kick as far with one foot as with the other, and for his size he is a top-notch mark. I have seen Doherty turn many a game in Collingwood's favor.

Fothergill, a mere youth, in his first year won the Copeland Shield for the most consistent player, which gives some idea of his worth.

Solid, though small, he is a natural footballer and one who is showing that a schoolboy champion can hold his own in any company. Roving also falls to the lot of Fothergill, who kicks with both feet, being a master of the stab-kick. Fothergill reminds me of "Chick" Drummond, a former Collingwood wingman. He appears to be slow but is seldom caught.

As I grow old I want to see good footballers. I can enthuse over anyone who plays good football. I trust that just round the corner there are dozens waiting to fill the places of the grand half-forwards I have mentioned.

I doubt if we will ever see another such as Horrie Clover.

(NEXT WEEK: The Greatest Flare-up in Football.)

As I See The Game

By ROD McGREGOR

FOOTSCRAY are right out of the "if" stage. They are playing the type of football that wins, and I expect them to be well in the front of the fight at the finish.

FOOTSCRAY have had a sensational rise, and already have won a bigger proportion of games than at any other stage of their League career. Their recent displays against Richmond and South Melbourne have left little to be desired, and certainly no room for doubt. I was more impressed with the game against Richmond than that of Saturday. The Tigers were harder and provided more of the type of opposition to be met with in the finals.

Whatever the personnel of Richmond, they are not in the habit of giving things away, and always make it hard for the opposition. I look on this game as the best given by Footscray for the season.

South, on present form, cannot be relied upon to play two games alike, and Saturday's display must have been one of their worst—not forgetting the opposition, of course.

Richmond, however, provided a real test, and although Footscray have a couple of definite weaknesses they are covering them up shrewdly. I expect them in their remaining games to give a very good account of themselves.

It seems now as if Footscray have a mortgage on the "four" for the first time since entering League ranks, and their entry into the finals will provide a refreshing change by the infusion of new blood. On a good day the Melbourne ground will suit them, and they will be one of the best draw-cards of the final round.

Not A Back Number

Jack Collins, of Geelong, has staged a most successful comeback, and that of Bob Pratt promises to be equally interesting.

As a football personality Pratt's return to form would be welcomed by followers of the game. Although he has struck two very bad Saturdays from the point of view of weather, he has shown up largely as a danger spot for opponents. At present South have not the men on the flanks and pockets to keep Pratt reasonably well fed, but if they can develop direct kicking from these points, particularly with a left-footer on the awkward side, he will get plenty of goals.

Bob is essentially a fair player, but he trusts his opponents too far. He must learn to protect himself better.

I think he has already had some shocks in realising how the mauling of forwards has grown like a weed during his absence, and how little protection can be expected from umpires.

No matter how fair a forward may be, he gets all sorts of sly pokes and thumps just because he is a source of danger. Similar offences out in the open would end in the offenders being reported.

A few of Pratt's movements on Saturday convinced me that he is far from being a back number. If South can regain reasonable form I expect to see Pratt getting goals with a good deal of his old-time brilliance.

Football certainly is a winter game, but that should not blind us to the fact that many players are next door to useless under muddy conditions. Seldom, however, do we see teams selected according to the weather. Selectors seem to go on hoping for the best and willing to take a chance with players not worth their game in the mud. In a cricket team, the reverse would be the case and, furthermore, it would be expected that certain players would play if conditions were not good. Why not the same in football?

Weather has been a big factor in causing the "four" to jump about. Certainties on a dry day have crashed through not being prepared and through hesitating to take the right course of action in selecting the team. Conditions, and not the selectors, should select the team. Bad weather is to be expected and the proper place to attack the wet day problem first is on the training ground. There is a lot to be learned about the wet ball and brains play a big part in the displays given by clever exponents.

Even though he is not particularly adapted to wet conditions, any player can learn a good deal if he trains with that purpose in view.

The fact is that too many players shirk an unpleasant duty during the week, but expect their game just the same. If selectors took the bold course and selected their teams according to the way that players demonstrated at training their ability or otherwise to handle the conditions, results would be more in keeping with normal team strength.

AS I SEE THE GAME

By ROD McGREGOR

With six matches still to be played the position of some clubs shows the futility of persisting with the present system of match arrangement. It favors a few and makes chopping-blocks of others.

WITH 12 matches played, it is obvious that the remaining places in the "four" are going to be fought out by the same old group. Essendon has still an outside chance, and if they, with Footscray, could make the grade, it would delight football followers generally.

The monotony of the same clubs always being in the forefront is not in the best interests of football. Even if a team fails to make the "four," but finishes in the first six, it has a big pull on the gates the following year. Argue as we may, gates are all-important.

If inclusion in the first six were entirely on merit, there would be no ground for complaint, but the fact is that some of the teams are presented with their positions through striking inequalities in the arrangement of the match programme.

The system by which the match programme is arranged, automatically places the burden of hard games on the teams that finish in the lower six group. That in itself should condemn it.

At least, there should be an equal distribution, and if there are any concessions to be given they should go to the clubs that are in need of them.

When we peruse the performances of the teams over the first 12 matches played, an analysis discloses the startling fact that, but for concessions, Geelong, Collingwood, Melbourne and St. Kilda would have little hope of being in this year's finals. The nature of these concessions is that they have the bulk of their matches against teams that finished in the lower six last season.

Weighted Out Of Race

Footscray have risen from obscurity to fame, Essendon are knocking at the door and have registered a really good performance. For the first time for several years these teams have been given a reasonable opportunity to make good with a programme of matches that is perfectly balanced. Each team has nine matches against the upper group, and nine matches against the lower group. They are not getting any concessions, but, on the other hand, they are not being ground into the soil by a burden. They are getting what the average football follower calls a "fair go."

The teams hit hardest are Fitzroy, Hawthorn and North Melbourne. They were in a hopeless position from the start, through overloading, and it is no wonder that they occupy the positions they now do. Of the 18 matches each that these teams have to play—54 in all—31 of those matches are against last year's upper six, and only 23 against their own group. In their combined programmes, they have played 36 matches to date, 21 of which have been against the upper and 15 against the lower.

They have scored 10 wins between them and three of those wins were against the upper group. These teams have been weighted out of the race.

One would naturally expect that the remainder of the programme would give them a let-up, but such is not the case. They have to struggle on for another six matches each, ten of which are against the upper group and only eight against the lower. It is just another case of the poor being always with us, and they are likely to continue so as long as the present system remains in force.

Committees At Fault

While a good deal of sympathy may be extended to teams in the position of carrying the heavy end, there is little excuse for their club committees. They entered into a contract of matches with their eyes open and evidently without protest. Either they overrated their ability or failed to study the programme when it was presented in the first case.

It could not be expected that the fortunate clubs would voice any protest, and if an easy means of getting into the "four" were given them why should they worry? At the same time, it is not a good business proposition for them, if they only realised it. Three seasons ago a ridiculously easy draw put South Melbourne out of the money, and they have been out of it ever since. Bad gates were the direct cause of South's decline.

In some quarters there exists the impression that the lower clubs must play the upper to get gates, and this is largely responsible for the acceptance of an abnormal match programme. I disagree. The thing that influences the public is the position on the list.

With few exceptions the same clubs have finished in the first six for at least five years past and during that time the great bulk of gate money has gone their way.

In a year noted for its changes there is, up to the present, only one change in last year's top six, so that, despite an apparent evening-up of teams the majority of the heavily-laden lower group seem destined to finish among the also rans. In fairness to all the present system should be scrapped in favor of one that gives more equal distribution.

W.A.'s Manchester

Western Australia maintained their reputation for smart players across the centre, but faded away in quality towards the ends in the match at the Melbourne cricket ground on Saturday. They lacked a little height forward and were unable to take full value from favorable advances made by open play and good passing. Against West's back division the extra height of Victorian key forwards gave them command.

West favored the open game, but on a ground that did not allow them to unwind their full speed they missed men of the type of their old stars, Matson, Craig, Outridge and McDiarmid to make the openings for their lighter brigade.

In the matter of grounds to which they have been accustomed, the visitors have been unfortunate in their trips to Victoria. The Melbourne ground has generally proved to be a "Manchester" to Western Australia, and they have never been able to show us the high quality football they can play when grounds are good. Even as it was, West would have made the game very close with a Todd in their team.

Gordon Coventry Tells Of The

GREATEST FLARE-UP EVER SEEN

There was a time when brawls and flare-ups were part and parcel of football, but tribunals have eliminated the fighting element until today it is rare to see anything more than a passing blow. Fighting between irresponsible juniors can be understood but for well-disciplined seniors to transgress is unpardonable.

Yet it is on record that League players have forgotten themselves so far as to stage a flare-up that would have done credit to "The Flying Angels," and "Crutchy Push," when those august pushes added color to football matches.

In this story Gordon Coventry tells the story behind the scenes of the hectic flutter between Carlton and Collingwood, at Victoria Park, a few years ago.

The champion forward thinks that there is not a ground in the Commonwealth large enough to hold the crowd who would want to see the same teams in action again if the flare-up was guaranteed, punch for punch.

Players converged in a moment. It was a wild melee, with the ball forgotten.

By GORDON COVENTRY, as told to J. M. Rohan

I DO not for a moment advocate that fighting or rough football is desirable, but do say that the football fans enjoy an occasional outburst, such as was staged at Victoria Park a few seasons back when Carlton and Collingwood got rid of a little over-exuberance that had been bottled up for some time.

It was hectic while it lasted. I have laughed many times over what happened that day.

In my junior days I have seen some grand battles. When Diamond Creek played Fairfield, it could be depended on that there would be a "free for all" that spectators could join in without invitation. It was a common occurrence for my team to have a strenuous day's fighting, and then continue for 10 minutes after the final bell.

I recall our team having to fight their way into the dressing room one day after playing a final against Fairfield at Alphington. It was 9 p.m. before we were able to fight our way out. When promoted to League ranks one has to have a different outlook.

League barrackers do not seem to have the same desire to encroach on the playing area as barrackers of junior teams of my day. Consequently players are more or less left to themselves, with large crowds passing judgment on them if their play is not up to standard, or their actions questionable.

Occasionally the strain is so great that something has to burst, and that's how it was at Collingwood when, with Carlton, the Magpies staged one of the biggest flare-ups known in League football. I wouldn't have been out of it for anything. It was something different, and it broke the monotony.

For some unknown reason there was a feeling in the air that the match would be one out of the ordinary. Everywhere I went for days before the game I was told that so-and-so would knock my head off. Other players for Collingwood were told the same.

No doubt Carlton players were being similarly warned. Of course, it will be understood that for years tussles between Carlton and Collingwood were "he man" affairs, and perhaps the fact that the teams went a bit too far just once is forgivable.

Both teams took the field full of expectancy. The ball was no sooner bounced than a clash took place between ruckmen. Carlton's full-back, Frank Gill, was standing with me.

"It won't be long now, Gordon," he said. Frank laughed when I told him that if I collected half a dozen whacks behind the ear I would just be getting my usual issue.

"THIS IS LIKELY TO BE YOUR BIG DAY," SAID GILL WITH A GRIN.

It was, too; but I was not receiver-general all the time.

When a ruck man from each side was seen bumping each other while the ball was yards away, it was evident that tempers would fray any moment. And it was not long before a few wild swings were let loose in the crushes. Every bump was charged with dynamite. Players who were usually cool seemed to be looking for fight.

It was the chance of a lifetime for a Stadium manager to hop in and book up some bouts. I thought that Frank Gill and myself were the only calm and collected players afield. We were enjoying the game up to the interval and would have bet any odds that we would not have been in any flare-up that looked likely to take place. But you never know.

How the players got through the first half without an explosion was a tribute to their discipline. But everyone was hovering round the barrel of gunpowder with lighted matches.

I realised that things would go off with such a bang any moment that I was on the qui vive when it happened.

At half time some players were made to feel that they would have to hop in and use a bit more weight and strength. That was about all it required to bring things to a head.

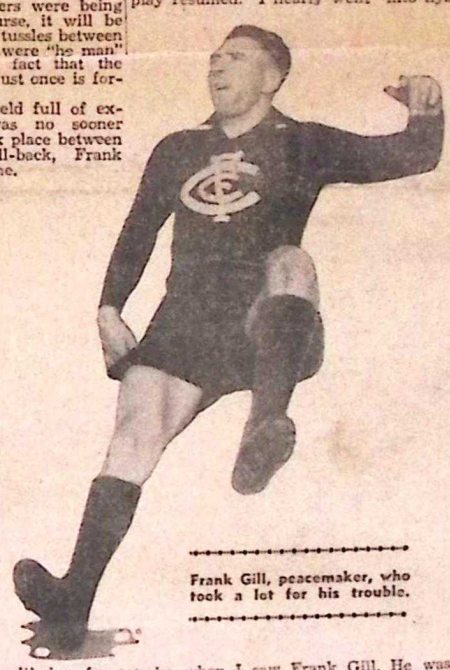
The third quarter was not long in progress when Frank Gill said, "They're off." Half-way down the ground and near the outer wing, players converged in a moment. It was a wild melee. Syd Coventry reeled out of a crush dazed. A few team mates went to his assistance, and as they did a Carlton player let fly a right swing that caught Syd on the side of the head. That was enough for me.

Blood is thicker than water. I ran fully thirty yards and swung round the man who hit Syd. I gave him a good hefty whack on the chin. I stopped a few wild swings while playing my small part in the fracas. I went back to my position at full forward, trying to look innocent, but feeling conscious of having made a faux pas that would not meet with the approval of League or with club officials.

Chief Actors Soon Laughing

All that mattered to me was that my brother would have the satisfaction of knowing that I was not missing when he was in trouble. Memories of the old days in junior football flooded back as I went to Syd's assistance that afternoon.

The chief actors in that football drama were laughing a few minutes after play resumed. I nearly went into hysterics when I saw Frank Gill. He was holding his jaw, complaining that he went to separate players and was whacked a couple of times on the point.



Frank Gill, peacemaker, who took a lot for his trouble.

He forgot his troubles when I said, "You should be like me and keep out of the fray." Frank looked me up and down and said, "Struth!"

Well, the flare-up was like the bursting of a bubble. Players soon settled down, and more than one wondered if his number had been taken. It would not have surprised me had 12 or 13 men been reported.

THE UNFORTUNATE PART WAS THAT THE UMPIRES CHARGED ONLY CARLTON MEN WITH INFRINGING THE RULES.

There had to be men of each side willing or a battle such as was seen could never have been staged.

So sudden was the flare up that umpires could not be blamed for not getting the numbers of offenders. Like the spectators, the umpires could have only a jumbled idea of what really did take place, and possibly if both clubs had been fined for unseemly behavior it would have been fairer than punishing a few individuals for something nearer twenty players were responsible for.

I was not surprised to find that I got away scot free as I entered the melee under cover; about 20 players converged on the hot spot as I went in to Syd's assistance. And like the other players in the match, I would have done anything in my power to get the Carlton men out of their trouble.

A feud between a couple of hotheads in each side, which was fanned by club partisanship, was no doubt the cause of the most sensational match in the League since that wild and woolly day when Geelong and North Melbourne crossed swords in a pitched battle that brought life and long term disqualifications to some of the participants.

I was not pleased at the part I played in the historic match; in fact, I was wondering how some of the keen patrons of the club viewed the whole affair.

With temerity I asked one of them what he thought of the game. I felt happy when he replied: "I enjoyed every punch of it."

Another told me he would go miles to see such a grand scrap. He was sincere in saying he enjoyed it immensely. A prominent football official told me that at last the League had found the solution of how to please football crowds.

It just goes to show how worked up footballers must be to forget their good manners before a crowd of more than 30,000. If it proves nothing else it is a tribute to their full-blooded enthusiasm.

Telling this story to Jack Rohan causes me some amusement. I recall that his comments on the fight were to the effect that a movie picture of the battle would have disclosed that more than three players should have been reported, also that a well-known player ran full 40 yards, gave a player a hit on the chin, and then casually took up his position again. I feel delighted that Jack was in the press box that day and was not one of the umpires.

Would Pack Largest Ground

Although the League frown on rough play and brawling, I am quite satisfied that if it was advertised that Carlton and Collingwood would stage that flare up again, no ground in the land could house the crowd who would pay top prices to see it. How we all love a scrap.

Next to our little affair with Carlton I would name the match at Perth between Victoria and West Australia in 1926 as the best. It will be remembered that those teams clashed heavily in the carnival series at Hobart in 1924. Feeling ran high.

The stalwarts of the West fit that they would have to conform to the style of the Victorians and bash the way through. "Fat" McDiarmid and Jerry Sunderland were just the two men who could play the strong man game and they did with a vengeance. No sooner was the ball bounced than punches flew in all directions.

Roy Cazaly and Syd Coventry were in the thick of it. It was a battle royal, and one that the players enjoyed immensely. I have not met one man since who doesn't grin as he refers to that hectic game.

Players of both States celebrated when it was found that the three players reported would not be dealt with, as the umpire failed to make his report correctly. He failed in that he only lodged his charges with the representatives of one State, and not of the two.

COLLECTIVELY THERE WERE MORE PUNCHES THROWN IN THAT GAME THAN IN ANY OTHER 12 GAMES I HAVE PLAYED IN.

Here again players laughed as they left the field, all happy that they were lucky to be participants in a real he-man's game.

The famous old player, Phil Matson, coach of West Australia, had one regret. He cursed that Father Time had not allowed him to be selected. He would have been in his element.

I wonder where the next decent football dust-up will be? I'd like to be there.

Next week: My Days With Collingwood.

Brisbane Win At Toowoomba

A BRISBANE Rugby Union team defeated Toowoomba 15 to 3 at Toowoomba, and won the inter-city shield. L. Walker at full back, and B. Schulte at half-back played capital games for the winners.

In Brisbane games Eagle Junction d. Brothers, 25—8; University d. Mayne, 29—17; G.P.S. d Y.M.C.A., 25—20.

As a result of Saturday's matches, North, South, Valley and West seem certain to be semi-finalists.

"Happy" Eyre Gone

SYDNEY lost a fine old sporting identity in Edward ("Happy") Eyre, who died on Sunday. A very good forward, he was a last-minute choice for the Union trip to New Zealand in 1894, and made himself somewhat noted by scoring the winning try in the test at Christchurch. Otherwise the tour was a failure.

He was later an official life saver at Manly. A son is a well-known golfer, one time holder of the Australian championship, and, like his father, a Rugby Union State representative.

Pace Sought In S.A. Team

CHANGES in the players chosen to practise for the match against West Australia at the Adelaide Oval next Saturday indicate that the South Australian selectors are seeking a faster side.

TWENTY-FIVE men are in the list—evidence that the selectors are in between two minds regarding many of the players—Hender, Morton, Biggs, Bampton, A. Burton, Bridgman, Bice, Cahill, Chinnery, Huxtable, Hollingworth, Hardiman, Jobson, G. B. Johnston, King, Mullins, Murdy, Quinn, Reval, Roads, Strezl, Colin Smith, Treleaven, T. Warhurst and West.

Farmer and Halliday were not available owing to injuries. Farmer's place in front of goals will be taken by Morton, of Sturt, while Huxtable replaces Halliday.

HARDIMAN MAY GO IN

Hardiman is expected to be brought in, and on the other side of Morton will be Huxtable. Hollingworth, no doubt, will be stationed at centre half-forward, with Murdy on the right flank, and Mullins taking the other position. Hender will lead the team from the centre. Cahill and Treleaven being on the wings.

The half-back line, it is anticipated, will be Jobson, Roads and Bampton. West takes the place of Dinnison (injured) as goalkeeper, while in the pockets Bridgman and Chinnery may be placed. Johnston, Reval and Quinn will be the first ruck, and Mullins, Bridgman and Huxtable, the second.

As the West Australians play a style brand of football to that exploited in Victoria, there will be a big crowd to see them in action in Adelaide.

105 Points For Season

IN Brisbane Rugby League West beat North, 13—12; Valley beat Brothers, 39—2; East beat South, 10. R. Williamson scored 15 points for Valley and made his total 105 for the season.

Hughie James Comes Home And Talks of

Some Great Men In A Great Game

By H. A. DE LACY

Hughie James is in Melbourne. Happy, laughing Hughie. He came for Anzac Day and was soon among his old acquaintances—footballers and cobbers from "over there."

The big Richmond ruck man of other days is now living at Wellington, New Zealand, but he has means of hearing the "match of the day" each Saturday.

NATURALLY football called him, and being near to Anzac Day, Hughie started to spin a yarn. It started with those days of snow-covered fields in France, and finished on the note of "great players I have met."

Hughie James, with Barney Herbert and Clarrie Hall, were three Richmond champions who lifted the former Association club colors to the top of the League mast.

"Football in France," said Hughie, "That would fill a book. No: I can't remember it all. Some things stand out like the Matterhorn, however.

Thrilled to Marrow Bones

"There was one day when we introduced the Australian game into London. What a game that was! I doubt whether any of the English onlookers understood what it was all about, but they were thrilled to the marrowbones, nevertheless. The Australians were encamped on Salisbury Plain.

"I was a lieutenant in the Pioneers. There were a lot of good footballers in the Pioneers—Bill Sewart, Tim Collins, Dan Minogue, Carl Willis and Boxer Milne, just to mention a few. These happy-go-lucky fellows had lots of friends, and a visiting they would go.

"Now, the work of the Pioneers entails bridge-building and general utility work. Well, they came in very useful in another respect on Salisbury Plain. Diggers will remember the trench that ran across the Plain, separating different units. The Pioneers were on one side and the friends often were on the other."

"The result was that, after a few noggins around a brazier the visitors would find the cold air too much and that ditch took a lot of negotiating. That is where the Pioneers came in — although, speaking from memory, I don't think the Pioneers themselves always did a clean job in recovering the fallen.

"Well, it was on just such an occasion as this that the idea of the football match originated. Frank Beaurepaire, I think, was the principal in arranging the match. I am really very hazy about all

[illegible] know is that we played that [illegible] on the show [illegible] London a touch of Australian [illegible] and I think they liked it. It [illegible] important game of football.

[illegible] another game in France. [illegible] must tell you about this. The [illegible] Divvy played the Fifth Divvy [illegible] for the Corps Championship.

"[illegible] a game! We were up against a good ruck—a big Tasmanian, a well-known fellow — I can't think of his [illegible] — well supported and was opposed to Dan Minogue, Len Gale and [illegible]. We had won Len Gale over [illegible] by. What a tiger he was as a [illegible] He afterwards played with [illegible]

"I had at the ground with my stars [illegible] noticed one or two of the Fifth Divvy fellows nudging each other. It was hard to imagine what they were saying, blinking hofficer, a la-de-da.'

Stopped Someone!

"The game started and immediately I [illegible] someone.

"It was only the start. Dan Minogue and four square and Len Gale went a bit further. We fought our way through two quarters when without warning the fight began in earnest.

"That finished the football. We were hard at it, hitting where a head bobbed up when who should walk out on the field but his nibs—brass hat and all. General—no, his name does not matter.

"Now cut this out,' he said, 'this a game instituted for the good relationship of the corps. Fighting is strictly prohibited. If it does not stop I'll cancel the whole affair.'

"He turned on his heel and away he went. He lost the football and the fight was a draw. But the memory is very sweet.

"Football followers will remember the final in 1921, between Carlton and the old Tigers, on the Melbourne Cricket Ground. When we left the ground at half time it was hard and dry. During the half time interval a storm broke. When we came out there was six inches of hail all over the ground. The match should have been called off at that stage, but on it went. Before ten minutes we were playing in slush.

"I'll never forget Paddy O'Brien that day. I got a lump of mud in my eye. Half-blinded, I grabbed Paddy by the guernsey and tried to use the back of it [illegible] eye.

Might as Well be Blind

"'I'll get out of it,' said Paddy. 'Anyway his sopping jersey. 'You might as well be blind for all the good you are.'

"Who played a game like that in [illegible] Can you imagine what it [illegible] That was a game between [illegible] allon and the 1st Divvy, at [illegible]

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"[illegible] from those days [illegible] club in the Lea-[illegible] work those fel-[illegible] after the war [illegible] leg-up.

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"The game started and immediately I stopped

Gordon Coventry Names Jimmy Freake As

THE GREATEST FORWARD

By GORDON COVENTRY, as told to J. M. Rohan

Football today seems to be one endless chain of goals with the forwards of each team getting opportunities almost every minute of the game. The "big shot" forwards notch three figure totals. Men of the calibre of Gordon Coventry and Bob Pratt have kicked more goals in four or five games than the champion goalkicker of 30 years ago kicked in a season. What does that imply? Would any present day fan say that sharpshooters of today are superior to Dick Lee, the late Jimmy Freake, and others who were the leading goalkickers in their time?

I WANT to correct the impression that some young barrackers have about the goal-kickers of pre-war days. To get a starting point allow me to first discuss a man whose name has lived down through the years — Dick Lee. Would Dick Lee have topped the century had the out of bounds rule, as it now stands, been played in his day? I venture to say that Pratt's performance of 150 goals in a season would have been well within the compass of Lee, who was tried and tested over a long period without ever losing a day's prestige as champion.

Lee was a sensational mark and kick. He played in the days when a team's strength was to be found on the back line, and many were the hard knocks he had to take in every game. I saw enough of him on the training ground at Collingwood to realise what a champion he was. And to him I owe much for any success I gained as sharpshooter for Collingwood.

When I joined up at Collingwood I swerved as I moved forward to kick. You could not depend on my direction; some of my kicks went to the right, some to the left; mighty few of them went just where I wanted them to go. I was just a junior who had commenced from the outset to get the distance without ever paying attention to accuracy. I had something to learn.

Correct Way To Shoot For Goal

When Dick Lee told me he wanted to have a word with me after I had warmed up at training one afternoon, I felt that I was going to have audience with the King.

I wondered what the great Lee could have to say to a raw recruit. I was not kept in suspense very long. When the coach told the forwards to have ten minutes at kicking for goal, Lee took me aside and asked me if I would like to improve my accuracy in kicking for goal. "Sure," I said, and puffed up with pride.

The champion did not know that I felt honored to be allowed to run around the same arena with him, much less having him take notice of me. That day started a friendship that remains unbroken.

Dick wanted to know what direction I was aiming at. I told him that I wanted my kicks to go through the centre of the goal-posts. "Right ho," said he. "Then face up to the goal."

He showed me the correct way to hold a ball, and that did away with my swerve. It was Lee who told me to give one look at the goal and then concentrate all attention on the ball. I never forgot that golden rule.

Although he was a fine drop and place kick, he advised me to keep on with my punt, as it was my natural kick, and I was showing direction and length with it.

Lee would have been a champion goal kicker in any era. He just could not help kicking goals, and with the opportunities he would have got in football had it been played in his day as it is now, he would have set a main that would have had the forwards of my day working overtime.

Dick Lee suffered a leg injury that was with him for years of his football. How he overcame it was a puzzle to the officials at Collingwood. It was because of that injury that he gave up the game to allow his pupil to take up the attack. Many, many times since he has told me that I have not made a bad job of it.

Strange to say, I always appreciated Dick Lee's words of congratulation more than others. I felt that they came from a man who knew how hard to get were goals. And Dick was a man of very few words.

Perhaps Dick Lee should be regarded as being before my time. Excluding him, I WOULD NAME THE LATE JIM FREAKE AS THE BEST FORWARD OF MY TIME. A lightweight, and not very rugged at that, little Jimmy made up with brains and ability what he lacked in weight.

His teaming with Percy Parratt was something every team in the League attempted to smash, but Freake kept on getting enough goals to keep him near the top of the goal kicking ladder, while Fitzroy were invariably closer to the top than we have seen them in recent years.

I consider the place kicking of Jim Freake the most accurate we have seen, and his leading out was brilliant. Parratt could kick blindfolded and find his mercurial little team mate, and I suppose the word anticipation is the one that can describe Freake's success best. He could not afford to sample the weight of rugged back men — they were toreadors in those days — so he had to rely on his pace and elusiveness to avoid disaster.

You can't keep out of trouble all the time in football, and Freake found it so. How he came up after some of the crashes I have seen him get puzzled [illegible] fellow like Freake could stand up to such usage; yet Jimmy got his share and came up for more.

On one occasion I heard a Collingwood captain telling our full back that he would have to keep closer to Freake.

"All right," came the reply. "Go and borrow Bill Proudfoot's handcuffs." Bill was a police officer and a former Collingwood full back.

It was my opinion that the player's suggestion was the only effective means any full back had of keeping close to the elusive Maroon.

To Freake goes my first vote as a full forward, and I will add that no two players have ever teamed so effectively as Freake and Parratt during my 18 years in the League. Their destructive work won the admiration of opponents and lovers of football.

A Lad From Wagga

From up Wagga way came Bill Mohr, who gets my second vote as a goalist. He proved his worth immediately in League company. I recall brother Syd saying that Mohr would go a long way and kick many goals. That was after Mohr's first game for St. Kilda against Collingwood.

Mohr knew the finer points of the game before coming to Melbourne. It was noticeable that he could anticipate a bump and go with it, thereby missing a great deal of its force. He was a master of the "stagger" run that got him out of tight corners, while his ground and air work were on par.

I envied Mohr's ground work. That was my weak department in football, and, incidentally, the reason why Collingwood players shot the ball high in my direction.

Bill Mohr was big and strong, being a most reliable mark, whose accuracy was a bugbear to barrackers of opposition teams.

Harry Vallence, of Carlton, stands high in my estimation as a forward. I would describe him as a freak forward because of the amazing marks he has taken and amazing goals I have seen him kick.

A prodigious punt kick, it was safe to say that if Vallence started off on the right leg his opponent did not get much quarter for the rest of the game. He seemed to save some of his most astounding efforts for Collingwood; many of his good goal-kicking performances were against my old team.

In case anyone differs from me regarding the ability of Vallence I would direct their attention to the long service he has had for Carlton. And then add up the goals he has scored for them.

Played Up To His Opponent's Weakness

Some clubs have gone on for years without getting a really good full forward who lasted any length of time Fitzroy can't grumble from that stand-point. To take the place of Jim Freake [illegible] baller, and one of the deep thinking type.

Moriarty put more thought into his game than any other player I know. He made a study of an opponent's style, and you could bet that he would play up to that man's weakness. He brought many clever tricks into his play, while his anticipation ranked with that of Jim Freake. He could turn like a hare either way, but every time in the direction least expected by his man.

Being able to kick as well with one foot as with the other, added to which was a clever baulk, made him a hard man to pin down. He would push the ball into your face and while you blinked he was round you and away towards goal.

Moriarty did not get the assistance from his flankers that Freake did; nevertheless he was a worthy successor, who, no doubt, inherited a love and knowledge of the game from his father, Geoff Moriarty, a famous old Maroon.

With Moriarty I rank George Moloney, who came from Western Australia to play for Geelong.

In his first game against Collingwood he gave a display that made the other forwards in the match look like novices. He kicked nine goals, some over his head, others over his shoulder, while one was propelled through the posts with his heel.

George was a loose-limbed fellow with an uncanny goal sense. It didn't matter how hotly pressed he was, he could always get his boot to the ball and send it soaring towards goal. Strangely enough he was not at all deadly with deliberate shots.

Man Of Many Parts

Moloney's merit as a footballer did not start and finish as a forward. When Geelong wanted a man for the centre, George had to go there, and he filled the position like the champion he was.

Moloney would go for skyscraping marks occasionally, pulling down some beauties. Most full backs had to acknowledge his ability in some game or other.

Mention of Moloney brings to mind the great player whose place he took—Lloyd Hagger. What a grand player was Lloyd. A nice ground player, he took many flights into space to get some awful crashes. He could turn on sensational football and his effort in the carnival final at Hobart in 1924 against Western Australia is still spoken of today as a classic.

Hagger was a good cartoonist who caused many jokes with his pencil on interstate trips.

Richmond have had wonderful service from Jack Titus. I christened him "Tantalising Titus" many seasons ago as he gave Collingwood more concern than enough. He is the possessor of a big box of football tricks which have exasperated a number of full-back men.

Titus can get an opponent rattled more quickly than any man I know. I consider him clever enough to hold down any position in a team because he is a natural footballer. I bracket him with Austin Robertson as the two finest drop-kicks in the game today.

Bert Hyde, of Hawthorn, showed great promise as a forward, but had to be shifted about to strengthen up other positions. I feel certain that he would have been a League star if persevered with as the team's goal-kicker.

Morrison Too Useful

The weakness of Footscray debarred Alby Morrison from rising to great heights as a forward. He had to be shifted all over the place to bolster up weaknesses; nevertheless he was a top-notcher at taking marks and kicking goals.

George Margitich came to Melbourne from South Australia, and was the best forward I have seen with the Red Legs. Though not robust, he could get his goals with smooth, clever football.

Jack Green showed great form up forward for Hawthorn. With a little more team strength Hawthorn could possibly have put Green at the top of the goal-kickers. A forward must get opportunities to kick goals.

Greg Stockdale had a meteoric career with Essendon with his left foot kicks, clever turning and ground play being the strong points of his game.

And Ted Johnson, of South Melbourne, was a player who could make good position and get many kicks. He was not an accurate kick, but full-backs regarded him as a terror to mind. Ted covered a lot of territory, a worrying procedure for full-backs.

Johnson's opinion of a team mate who kicked the ball high is unprintable. He often asked me how I felt as I stood waiting for a ball to come down, to be crashed to the ground very often before the ball arrived.

Most Spectacular Forward

Mention of a South Melbourne forward naturally brings up the name of Pratt, who could turn on football of a brand that could not be eclipsed.

I have seen him start for the ball yards after an opponent and pull off a 1000 to 1 chance. He did that repeatedly. As a fighter he won out many times with sheer determination. I have seen him knocked from pillar to post and still keep on. He was a freak.

When I saw Pratt in action in 1933 I predicted that he would smash all goal-kicking records to pieces. He looked like doing in eight years what it took me 18 years to accomplish. His 150 goals in one season is something I can appreciate more than most people.

To Pratt goes my vote and congratulations for playing the most spectacular games on a forward line that I have ever seen.

If you are an outstanding League forward you are paid a great deal of attention. I was delighted when a few midgets got into the Collingwood team and commenced to kick goals. It was most noticeable that I did not get so much attention, while the newcomers experienced some of the bumps and spills that once were all mine.

(NEXT WEEK: Secret of Collingwood's Success.)

From top: Jimmy Freake, Fitzroy; Bob Pratt, South Melbourne; Jack Titus, Richmond; George Moloney, Geelong; and Jack Moriarty, Fitzroy.

J. Collins With The Seconds

THE relegation of Jack Collins, Geelong's former champion, to the seconds, after having played a little over a match this season, was freely discussed by club supporters at the Geelong v. North Melbourne match today.

Many contended that, while Collins had failed to reveal the form that characterised his play in former years, he would have been much better served in his efforts at a comeback if he could have taken his place in the side against North Melbourne, which, in the past, had not unduly troubled Geelong at Corio Oval, and where he would have obtained further match practice without lessening his confidence, as would be the case by his being dropped to the Seconds.

Playing with his former comrades would, it was felt, enable Collins to settle down and thereby become the great player that Geelong at present require so badly.

The selectors stated that with so many of their players below form they found it impossible to include Collins, whose form had not come up to expectations. The seconds had been weakened by the supply of players to the first and it was thought that Collins, although not at his top, would be of great assistance to them while still regaining his form for further inclusion with the seniors.

THE CHINWAGGERS' COLUMN

By H. A. de Lacy

THE Victorian Football Association are examining possible results from reducing football playing strengths from 18 to 16. The new throwing rule introduced this season has so opened up play, so speeded it up that it seems to be a natural suggestion that two men can be done without.

For 16 men to carry on a game, however, they would have to be of a slightly better grade throughout than present teams are. Throwing has speeded up the game so much that only the fittest men can keep up with the ball. The result has been that the heavier ruck men have not been able to keep up with the ball sufficiently to be there when the ball is thrown in after passing the boundary line. Consequently, place men have combined for the "throw-in." This is becoming more marked every week as teams master throwing. It is natural, therefore, to ask "Why have rucks?"

Making The Game Even Faster

SIXTEEN men aside would mean stunning football. The Association code is far ahead of the League game as a spectacle at present. There is more scrambling by comparison and certainly much less whistle. With such a start the Association have the foundation on which further to improve their game. If 16 men aside is introduced it may also be necessary to appoint two boundary umpires on each side of the ground.

At the end of this season the Association might well consider the introduction. For instance:—

1. **Ordering a recalcitrant player off the field by an umpire.**
2. **Throwing the ball in the air in the centre at the start of a quarter after each goal or elsewhere in a game instead of bouncing it, as with "all-up" decisions now.**
3. **When a ball crosses the boundary line and rebounds, let the game go on. Call it out of bounds only when it is right over the fence or dead against the pickets.**

The Association are doing splendid work in lifting the tone of the Australian code. I am not alone in saying that if you saw two Association teams playing the throwing the ball code as it should be played you would not tire second look at the League code where throwing is prohibited.

The Association had this reduction of teams before them for consideration earlier in the season. They rejected it then. I felt at the time that they were a little wary as to how their new throwing rule would operate. Now, with its proclaimed success they are more confident.

At the time of earlier consideration the Association had been the under dog for so many years that they had developed a definite inferiority complex. In that mood it is difficult to see innovations with confidence. Now, however, the case is entirely different. Every rule the Association has introduced has been an outstanding success. Now they are prepared to go further.

Les Charge Is Hale And Hearty

LAST WEEK in the item by Hughie James on great players he had met it was suggested that Les Charge, the former South Melbourne player, had not returned from the war. I received a ring from a brother of Les to the effect that Les is hale and hearty living at Sydney. So, as in the case of Mark Twain, reports had been "exaggerated."

Les and his brother, whom as a youngster, I knew as "Fatty," came from the Yarra St. school to Northcote. I remember them walking down Martin St., Northcote, on their way to play in that well-known church competition of those days in Northcote—the full name eludes me, but there were the "Co" and the "Trins" and the "Imps." Here the Charges had their early football glimpses.

If I remember rightly Bob Scott, former League umpire had his experiences as an umpire in this competition. What experiences they were! Just a good-natured free for all with every whistle blast!

So apologies to Les Charge.

South Australia Wants The Flick Pass

Already the South Australians are inquiring about the throughout. They want it. No official action has been taken, but, according to Allan, The Globe's South Australian representative, the fast open with the flick pass always has been favored. Now, since the Victorian particular have questioned the legality of the flick pass is interpreted the South Australians, they are saying, "Well, give us the two-handed

League Game Said To Be Brutal

ALTHOUGH Victoria has soundly defeated South Australia in interstate matches in recent years, the South Australians scorn the Victoria type of game. I have been told a dozen times at Adelaide that the Victorian close-packed game is brutal and cowardly.

A party from the S.A. Rowing Association, together with members of their crew, visited the Carlton-Richmond match on Saturday. On Monday morning I blithely asked them for their opinions of Victorian football. I am rather sorry I did.

The game to the South Australians was a series of cowardly scrambles. They were disgusted as individuals, though as an official party they had little to say.

"I hope that type of game never comes to Adelaide," said one who had played football in Australia.

The South Australians also played the open game. I had the opportunity of seeing about six months of their football two years ago. Their games are well conducted, the umpiring much stricter here. I think they favor the over-much and lack something of Victoria's knowledge of how to play. They work the ball in front and it across to a pocket, while football. Still, they played a infinitely better game to look at.

Gordon Coventry Tells when he

Scored Five Goals And Lost Five Teeth

GORDON COVENTRY can smile, despite the loss of teeth.

By GORDON COVENTRY, as told to J. M. Rohan

To play in a football final series on the Melbourne Cricket Ground is the ambition of every footballer. Thousands of League players have gone through their careers without attaining that end. Although it is hallowed ground, Gordon Coventry, King of Forwards, played there so often that to him it felt like Collingwood's home ground.

In this story, Coventry tells of the final series of 1920, his first year in the League, and the part he played for the Magpies.

The first final he played in was nearly his final League game. "For every goal I scored I lost a tooth," says Coventry, "and my tally of goals was five."

He tells of his impressions in those far-off post-war games.

IN my 30 appearances on the Melbourne Cricket Ground in semi-finals, finals and grand-finals, the match that remains in mind most clearly is my first. It was against Fitzroy, in the first semi-final of 1920. Naturally I was excited to get selected.

I wondered how I would fare with such men as Stan Molan, Percy Parratt, Len Wigraft, Gale, Fergie and others who were mighty men to the juniors of those days.

I might say that the bigness of the occasion found me almost as nervous as I was on the day I played my first League game. The day dawned with leaden sky. I know, because I was up and saw it.

The ground was a quagmire long before the curtain-raiser was over. In my opinion it was a day on which the champions would come down to the level of the youngsters, and so it turned out.

Scramble About Like Paddock Players

With the ground under water in places we scrambled about in much the same fashion as paddock footballers. The only ones to show any semblance of form being the little men on either side. Charlie Pannam, Dobrigh and Drummond I clearly recall as the men who helped Collingwood to victory, while the forward division, which included yours truly, put up the edifying goal-kicking effort of 4-17 to Fitzroy's 3-5.

My boyhood dreams were shattered. I would have felt more satisfied if that Collingwood game had been a practice match instead of semi-final. I was of the opinion that Diamond Creek could have beaten both Fitzroy and Collingwood on their showings.

My disappointment at the class of football was soon forgotten. It pleased me to know that I had the game behind me and I did not feel so "windy" when selected to play in the final against Carlton.

Had I known what was in store for me before the 57,764 people who turned up to see Collingwood and Carlton in that final, cart horses wouldn't have dragged me to the M.C.G. The fact that we had to take the field without Dick Lee affected the morale of the side a little, while the receipt of a letter, a phone message, and a few verbal messages to the effect that Paddy O'Brien, the Carlton captain, would murder me, did not have me in a happy frame of mind.

It just had me thinking. Not that I was afraid of what O'Brien would do to me, but what he could do to Collingwood if I failed to hold my own with him. I was not long in suspense.

Toughest Half Back Of That Period

Without a doubt Paddy O'Brien was the hardest, toughest and most dashing half-back of that era. His determination was such that he would have gone through a brick wall for his side. Incidentally, he bowled me over as though I was a 1st. wingman.

That was a great Carlton side; but everything went wrong on the day. Let me recall a few members of the side to bear out my contention—Horry Clover, Boromeo "Malleo" Johnson, Rup. Hiskens, McLatchie, Greenhill, Daykin, and others. And I was being watched by the toughest of them all—Paddy O'Brien.

In the 17 years' League football I have played since that eventful match I have had some wonderful times and enjoyed every game. Had anyone seen me at the end of that 1920 final I would have bet them any odds, and to any amount, that I would never don a guernsey in League football again. No player ever finished a game in so much pain as I did that day.

"Snowy" Lumsden was our captain. "Don't fiddle with these fellows," he said, "or you'll find yourself in hospital."

Lumsden's idea was that we had to meet force with force, and I tried to do my bit in that direction. Getting into a collision I had five front teeth knocked out in one fell swoop. It happened in the second quarter.

I felt that my right place was in the Melbourne Hospital, but when a few team mates gathered round and treated my injury lightly, I thought I had better carry on. Paddy O'Brien cheered me up by saying that I wouldn't get toothache where my teeth had been. It was evident to me that he went round me instead of through me from the time of the accident up to half-time.

Nothing Dirty About His Play

When we came out on to the field after the interval O'Brien came up and asked how I felt. "Rotten," I replied. "Bad luck," he said, "it's war again when the ball is bounced." And it was too.

There was nothing dirty about O'Brien's play. He bumped hard and often, never moaning when caught on the wrong leg. Paddy is one of my best friends, despite the many hard bumps he gave me. It may be thought that in kicking five goals in that final —a goal for each tooth lost—I was happy at my showing. I was not.

Receiving treatment after the match, I wanted to get home as soon as possible. Bruised from head to foot, and with a mouth like a squashed tomato, I was a very disconsolate youngster as I sat in the corner of the carriage that carried me home. My mind was made up long before I reached home that I had played my last League game. In fact, I was wondering if the knocks and bruises received in any grade were worth while. My dear old mother and father were in accord with my views when they saw the mess I was in.

Dad's advice was to stick to Diamond Creek and let Collingwood go to the devil. But my mother said, "Don't worry the boy; let him make up his own mind about where he intends to play."

Mothers always are right. She knew how my older brothers got over their knocks and bruises and were available for selection the next Saturday. And when I had read glowing accounts in the Monday papers about Collingwood's glorious victory and young Coventry's five goals, I was on the look-out for the postman for my notice to play for the Magpies against the Tigers in the grand final.

Looking back on that hectic final I can recall the great ruck duels with fine players like "Flapper" Hughes and Con McCarthy bearing the brunt of the battle for the Magpies, while Carlton, better equipped with followers, kept the pace on from bounce to bell. And it is a happy memory to think of the polished displays of Jack Elder, the man who umpired the game according to his own ideas and not to the letter of the book, as some do today.

Felt Like An Old Campaigner

By the time the day arrived to take the field against Richmond in the grand final I felt like an old campaigner. Minus my teeth, I must have looked funny. Max Hislop, the fine Richmond half-back, greeted me with a smile and said: "I'm sorry Carlton didn't leave a few front teeth for me to knock out." Max was a dasher and I found him so fast off the mark that I was left standing more than once.

That grand final lost some attraction when it was known that Dick Lee and George Bailes, the crack goalists of each side, would be missing, but spectators had their money's worth as it was a clinking game with the Tigers on top at the finish with 7-10 to 5-5.

Hugh James and Jimmy Smith played like men possessed, and ably backed Max Hislop. Even in defeat I did not hear a Collingwood player say a word other than praise for the umpiring of Jack Elder.

Unexpectedly called into the Collingwood side at practically a moment's notice, I played two home and home games, a semi-final, a final and grand final. I was one of the youngest players to have that experience. League football was in my blood and I knew that stagefright in football had left me for ever. I ticked the days off for the opening of season 1921.

In the seven weeks I had been training at Collingwood I was taught many tricks and could kick reasonably far with my left foot, which was a "dud" when I first went there. My drop-kicking improved, and I was better balanced as a result of the coaching and training.

Lost Distance

Strange to say, however, with the balancing, I lost distance with my right foot kicks. That worried me a bit, as you require distance kicks when playing on the half-forward line. The first night I was shown the blind turn I felt that the Collingwood ground was far too small for the movement. It proved otherwise after a little practice. My elevation from junior ranks was the start of a migration from the Heidelberg competition to League teams. Collingwood officials asked my opinion of several players. All I could say was that if I ever looked a prospect I knew players in the Diamond Valley who would be sure to make the grade into League company. The year after I made my League debut players who came to Collingwood from the Heidelberg competition were Laurie Murphy, Clem Splatt, Len Ludbrook and Joe Poulter. Bill Twomey, Brownlow Gift winner and one of the finest wingmen to play the game, also was from Heidelberg way. From the outset of my career as a League player it was noticeable to me that matches against Richmond, Carlton and Fitzroy always seemed to be keen.

Against those teams there was never any hesitation on either side about hopping in lively. The feeling never altered and some of the games between those teams and Collingwood were real pitched battles.

As a result of hard knocks received in my opening games with Collingwood I realised that I would have to find some means of protecting myself. One trick I played effectively was to shorten my run to the ball. In that I mean that instead of going forward when in front of my man, I obstructed him for a split second which allowed the ball to come to us.

Another weakness I eliminated from my game was that of giving a thought to the man coming from behind. The player who is wondering what is going to fall on him is naturally not paying full attention to the ball, and consequently does not handle it with the same certainty as the man who is not apprehensive.

Had Some Whacks Behind the Ear

Mind you, I have had some beautiful whacks behind the ear for disregarding the man coming in from behind, but it made my game.

When I first joined the League players did not come from behind to knock a ball away. Back men always attempted to take the mark and were prepared to back their judgment against the man in front. When I started to kick a few goals I found the ball being knocked away repeatedly.

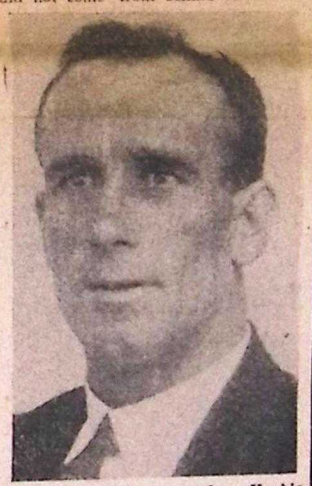
To this I gave a lot of thought and the only means I could devise to combat those measures was to go for a mark with arms stretched well forward, at the same time shortening my run. Another means I used with effect if I had the back man well behind me was to delay my run and then go forward and take the mark on my chest.

The swerving run was another trick that got me out of trouble and scored me many goals. I picked that up through watching Charlie Pannam. He would run at you and with the slightest swerve one way or the other would confuse you until you were tied up in knots.

It is a sort of half baulk that causes the man in your path that little indecision that allows you to get past him. It seldom failed me.

Whether my methods were right or wrong I'll leave others to judge. I do know that in following my ideas I was on insurance for only six weeks in my eighteen years in League football.

NEXT WEEK: Full Backs of my Time.



Played like one possessed — Hughie James, of Richmond.

J. Woodhouse (right) and J. Pola (left), West Perth players, watch a team-mate, E. Tyson, kick a goal in the match against Perth at Leederville Oval on Saturday.

HEAVY CASUALTIES

GEELONG FINISH COURAGEOUSLY

GEELONG officials were confronted by a problem on Saturday at half-time when it was found that three players were unfit to resume after the interval. Harwood left the field just before half-time with the webbing of his hand split by a stop. Grant, turning sharply, ricked his knee, while Toyne received a kick on the chin which rendered him senseless.

On examination it was found that Toyne was the worst sufferer, with slight concussion. The other two, therefore, resumed, both with their injuries strapped. Near the close of the third quarter, Grant, limping in a forward pocket, fell in a determined effort to kick the ball through, and further injured his knee, leaving the side with only 17 players to endeavor to snatch a victory in the last term.

At one stage it looked as if Geelong, with only 17 men, might be successful when they got within 8 points of their opponents with 10 minutes to go, but Footscray steadied and added another goal to win the game.

Queensland Side For First Union Match

THE first interstate Rugby Union match of the season will be played at Brisbane on Saturday, when New South Wales will meet Queensland. They will play again on Monday.

There are five players new to big football in the home side—Les Walker, McNamara, Stark, Gibbs and Rodgers. Walker and Rodgers are ex-League men who changed over only this year, and have won their caps after only three games. Rodgers is heavy, but has surprising pace for a forward.

McNamara is under 10.0, and a bit light for a half, but has the cleverness to offset his lack of size. Lewis played on the wing against Toowoomba, but the selectors have him in his accustomed place at five-eighths.

The side seems strong enough to have an excellent chance against the best the visitors can field.

In Q.R.U. premiership matches on Saturday New Farm d. Brothers, 28-11; M.C.A. d. G.P.S. Old Boys 19-17; University d. Mayne 27-6. N. Paxton and J. Ward each scored three tries for New

"— LEAGUE FOOTBALL DEMANDS OF ITS EXPONENTS THE COURAGE TO FACE THE TOUGHEST OPPOSITION WITH CONFIDENCE AND DETERMINATION." — (SOMEBODY OR OTHER'S SLAH.)
V.F.L. 958 SEASON OPENING MATCHES TODAY
PLAYERS
'E AIN'T PLAYIN'! 'E WAS DROPPED WEEKS AGO!
YEAH! BUT AIN'T 'E GOT THE RIGHT STUFF IN 'IM!
McRAE

HE HAD THE DETERMINATION!

Gordon Coventry, Champion Goalkicker, tells when his

Knees Knocked with Stage Fright!

GORDON COVENTRY after finishing a kick.

Here commences the life story of Gordon Coventry, champion goal-kicker and one of the greatest personalities Australian football has known. It is a story that might never have begun —but fate decreed that the name of Coventry should have an honored place in the annals of the game.

Gordon Coventry, when 18, accepted an invitation to play with Collingwood. He arrived at Victoria Park station, went half-way down the ramp, got stage-fright and went back to the station. Only the thought of his brothers thinking him a "jib" prompted him to enter the training rooms of the club he helped to win many premierships, and for whom he kicked 1299 goals.

In this story the goal-making machine tells of his youthful days and early games for the Magpies.

By GORDON COVENTRY as told to J. M. Rohan

ALL the goals I kicked for Collingwood and the Victorian side in my 18 years of football were the result of team-work.

And I realise early in this attempt to tell my life story that team-work is again to play a part. I feel happy that I am teamed with an old football identity, as he can help me to recall many incidents and highlights that might otherwise slip my memory.

When I asked from where I should take up my football career, I was told to start from the beginning, so here I go back to the old home orchard at Diamond Creek, where I first saw the light of day on September 25, 1901.

Being the youngest of seven brothers, all big husky fellows, I was always regarded as the kid. I was mighty proud of the way they could kick a football and made up my mind that one day I would be able to do better than any of them.

Hated Boots

In those days I hated boots. The moment I got out of school I would take off my boots and socks and stroll home with them tied round my shoulders. My brothers had instructions that they were to give me a whacking if they caught me bootless and many a chase we had with them striving to carry out the orders of my parents.

Barefooted I could lead them a merry dance across paddocks, impervious to the prickles and thorns. The soles of my feet were like leather. In those days I could kick a football as far with my bare foot as I could with boots on.

So at the age of 13 I found myself playing for Diamond Creek with some of my brothers, Syd. being the captain. I recall that on a few occasions six Coventry brothers played in the one game.

My eldest brother, Harry, was a good footballer. He was invited to play with Carlton, but he went to Porepunkah, where he played most of his football. Like Syd and myself he was a marathon, as he played for 16 years.

Did Not See Best

And I can say now that the Victorian Football League did not see the best of the Coventrys. Norman won the best and fairest medal several times in the Tiddlywinks competition, and was playing for the Fitzroy Juniors when the war broke out. He went abroad and was killed at Pozieres. He was as heavy as Syd, but had great pace and was an ideal footballer.

Norman was definitely a better footballer than Syd or myself, and we both realised it.

Two other brothers went to the war, but they did not take football seriously on their return to Australia. My brothers worked in the mines at Diamond Creek and were strong fellows. Syd left Victoria to take a job in the mines at Queenstown, Tasmania, and soon found himself captain of the local football team. He just seemed to be born to lead in football and success came his way in the form of two premierships for Queenstown in his two seasons as coach.

I just kept on pegging away at Diamond Creek, think it must be great to be playing for a senior side. At the age of 15 I could punt a ball 60 yards with little effort.

Then came a doctor to the district who joined our club. Who should it be but Dr. Eric Cordner, former University and interstate star. He weighed a "ton," and showed us how weight should be applied. I picked up many of the finer points of the game from him.

In between times I saw a few League matches, Fitzroy being the team I barracked for. My heroes in Fitzroy were George Holden and Lal McLellan.

Saw His Inspiration

One day I went to see them play St. Kilda and in that game saw my inspiration. He was big Dave McNamara. He played one of those games footballers dream about. I marvelled at his agility, marking and kicking, which was terrific. He was my ideal footballer. Using fair means no one could get near him.

Seeing McNamara damped my enthusiasm to a great extent as I felt that if would be impossible to ever attain form sufficiently good to play in a game with men of McNamara's calibre. Still he remained my hero, and just kept on playing centre half-forward for Diamond Creek.

There was plenty of action in the Diamond Valley football, as Fairfield and Greensborough were ultra-keen when opposed to Diamond Creek. Every match was hard fought for the four quarters, with a good old box-on after each game. Some of my old opponents in those games are my good pals today, and we often have a laugh when recalling the days of our boyhood football.

The Heidelberg competition ended early, as there were only six teams. After Diamond Creek had been defeated by two points in the 1920 final, I received a visit from Collingwood officials. Evidently a scout from the Magpie nest had seen our game, and, as I had a day out, the report on my play must have interested them. On the Sunday morning Ernie Copeland, Jack Joyce and Jack Peppard came out to my home. I was not at home, but my mother did not take long to have me located. I was awed.

Promised Game With Collingwood

They promised me a game with Collingwood the followed Saturday. I came along and joined up with the squad and excited, I really forgot what they said when they wanted me to turn up on the Tuesday evening at training.

The men who waited on me were big men in football. To think that they would travel all the way to Diamond Creek had me puzzled. After they left I walked about for the rest of the day in a trance. Little sleep came to me as I tossed and turned that night.

With my togs in a little bag, I set out from home on the Tuesday afternoon for Victoria Park. I was worked up to a high pitch of nervousness, and was in a fever when the train rolled into the station. Waiting until all the others had left the platform, I commenced to walk down the ramp that led to the football ground. Half way down I was overcome with stage fright, and turned back on to the platform.

For ten minutes I fought with myself to try and get over the nervous funk I was in, and had a train for home come along, I feel sure I would have boarded it.

It flashed through my mind how wild my brothers would be if I turned down a chance with a League club. That was the deciding factor. I would sooner face what was in store for me at Collingwood than go home and tell my brothers that I was frightened to enter the dressing room.

If the train service to Diamond Creek had been more frequent, perhaps there would not have been a Coventry playing for Collingwood. When I was established in the side, I told them that Syd. was a better player than I, and that they should go after him. So my indecision on the ramp at Victoria Park could easily have altered the career of Syd. as well as my own.

Had Cordial Welcome

When I entered the Collingwood room for the first time I did not have time to think. With a fatherly smile, Ernie Copeland had me in a whirl all the time. I was changing into my football togs. In what appeared to be an hour, but actually was only a few minutes, I was out on the arena to be greeted by Jock McHale and a number of players, one being the famous Dick Lee.

All made me feel welcome, but when I saw their evolutions, I gave up hope of ever making League grade.

Blind turning, left-foot kicking and stab passing were things of which I knew nothing. In fact, I couldn't kick over a jam tin with my left foot. I realised my technique was rotten.

Fully expecting to be told that I had better have another year or so with the juniors, I was surprised to be told not to forget to be down for training on the Thursday. Wondering where the catch could be, I turned up again, only to see the Magpies flitting round and doing things that I could not attempt.

Turning to Jock McHale, I told him that I couldn't even attempt the things some of the players were doing with ease. I was surprised when Jock said, "You don't have to."

Thought Them "Balmy"

When the Friday morning post brought me a letter which said, "You have been selected to play at St. Kilda and must report at that ground not later than, etc., etc." I was surprised and amazed. I really thought Messrs Copeland, Joyce and Co. were "balmy."

Sleep was out of the question on the Friday night. I was up and about at daylight and arrived at the St. Kilda ground just two hours before the game commenced. Everything was a blur to me. Dick Lee and "Snowy" Lumsden tried to comfort me by telling me that the nervousness would leave me the moment we got out on to the field.

Their words of comfort were all astray. The moment I stepped on to the arena I went at the knees. I couldn't shake off the stage fright for three quarters, during which time Cyril Gambetta was running hoops round me and not allowing me to get a kick.

I got one goal in that game and would not be drawing a long bow if I admitted that it was the only kick I had in the game. I saw hundreds of lads having their first League games thereafter, but none was so inglorious as mine.

I was sick and sorry and dreaded my trek home to Diamond Creek to tell my relations and pals that I was a real "flop" as a League footballer. It was no surprise to me to be dropped for the next match against Carlton, but I was genuinely surprised to get a cheery invitation from Ernie Copeland to be sure and turn up for training.

I tried to argue that I was out of my element, but the tactful old Ernie said, "You'll show them next time, Gordon!" I didn't think there would be a next time, but longed for a chance to show that my first performance was not my true form. And then I was selected to play against South Melbourne. I [illegible] three goals and everyone seemed satisfied.

I haven't told that I was in the centre half-forward position, playing in front of that star goal-kicker, Dick Lee. Well, the game against South Melbourne was the last of the home and home matches, and Collingwood just scraped into the four ahead of the Southerners.

Considered Job Finished

I felt that my job was finished for the season. I had no illusions, and did not for a moment think that a raw recruit would be called on to play in the semi-finals. My idea on that subject was that experience counted more than ability in the finals before thousands of people.

To be candid, I did not want to be selected, as I felt that the task would be beyond me.

The player is not master of his own destiny in football until he goes out on the arena. It must be remembered that a selection committee says yea or nay for players, and the Collingwood selectors made up my mind for me by sending me a letter instructing me to be at the Melbourne Cricket Ground not later than 2 p.m. to play as centre half-forward against Fitzroy.

(Next week I will tell of my first year's appearances on the famous ground in the final series, and how my thoughts were temporarily turned against football.)

Association Opening

THE Association opened on Saturday, when conditions could not have been worse. The games were played in semi-summer weather and stifling red dust.

Great interest was taken in the new rules. Football followers generally were impressed by them.

All games were keenly contested, and a close season is expected. Prahran and Brunswick, last year's premiers and runners-up respectively, are again strong.

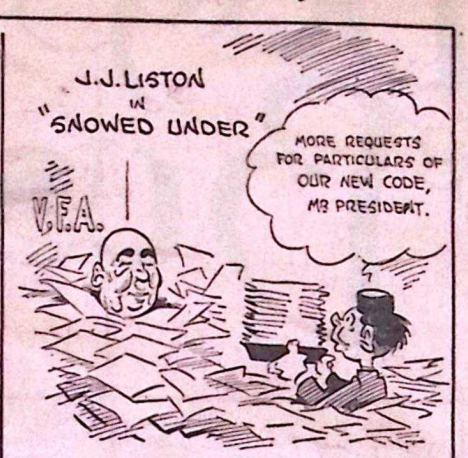
Saturday's results were:—

Brunswick 19.21, d. Coburg 11.11; Camberwell 17.13, d. Oakleigh 12.14; Northcote 10.14, d. Preston 7.14; Brighton 11.19, d. Sandringham 10.10; Williamstown 15.17, d. Yarraville 12.23; Prahran 19.14, d. Port Melbourne 12.16.

The second round on Monday resulted:

Camberwell 14-15 d. Williamstown 6-12. Oakleigh 13-16 d. Port Melbourne 11-27. Brunswick 11-17 d. Sandringham 12-7. Brighton 12-13 d. Northcote 10-12. Yarraville 14-9 d. Coburg 9-19. Prahran 15-31 d. Preston 6-12.

Who's Who In The Theatre—Of War



PLENTY OF WEIGHT AND EFFORT were used here, but the ball went on. From left: R. Reynolds (Essendon), Crane and O'Neill (Richmond), Watts and T. Reynolds (Essendon).

Charlie Doig Says—

"Let Us See More Of Throw"

Charles Doig, doyen of Western Australian football as player and official, saw the Association rules for the first time on Saturday.

He wants to see more of the throw. What surprises him is the wrong conceptions that are being circulated in opposition to the throw.

MR DOIG is father of Charlie and George, well known in East Fremantle's colors, was president of East for 13 years, and an official before that.

Mr Doig was pleased with what he saw at Brunswick, where the Association semi-final between Northcote and Prahran was played.

Regarding the throw he says:—

MINIMISES SCRIMMAGES

"This throw opens up the game and minimises the scrimmages. While I was at Brunswick, despite what we Westerners would describe as appalling conditions, there was not one ball-up decision. The ground was waterlogged, yet the play was opened out repeatedly by the clever use of the throw.

"Under such conditions the throw had definite advantages over ordinary handball.

"I think you have to see the throw in operation fully to understand it. I was told it ruined kicking. The kicking was really first-class for a heavy, wet day, and I could not see where the throw was likely to develop into 'throw ball,' as I was told. The throw was used like ordinary handball, and kicks were taken when they should have been.

"The virtue of the throw is the easy disposal of the ball. As far as I could see it cleared up the holding-the-man holding-the-ball rule. Indeed, I followed the umpiring very easily.

"The game was fast and very open in circumstances that made for heavy scrimmages.

"I would like to see these new rules played in an exhibition game, so that the people in the West could see them.

"Under better conditions and given to the better players of the League sides, this cod of laws will make our game into an even finer spectacle than it has been.

"DON'T CONDEMN OFF-HAND"

"I suggest that these rules should not be condemned off-hand. There's a great deal to be learned from this Association code, and I would like our people in the West to see something of the throw.

"Myself I would like to see the throw on a fine day. It certainly appealed to me as a wet-weather measure. I am rather conservative about alterations to laws, but I am a bit the throw's way as a result of what I have seen in Victoria."

Barney Herbert Says—

Bring In Throw-At Once

BARNEY HERBERT, Tiger stalwart as player and president, has entered the lists on behalf of the adoption of the throw by the Australian National Football Council.

He likes the new Association rules and says so in his usual frank way, in a letter to hand today.

MR HERBERT'S letter was a surprise in today's mail.

His is an opinion on the new Association rules totally unsolicited. His natural eagerness to see the code advance forced him to express an opinion on what he and other fine judges of the game consider a rule that will lift Australian football to the highest plane yet.

This is what Mr Herbert says:—

To The Limit

May I be permitted to add my voice to the burning question of the day in the football world—the splendid new rule recently introduced by the Association—throwing the ball.

Like my pal, Dan Minogue, I am behind the idea right to the limit.

It does one thing that the Victorian Football League has been endeavoring to do for a long time—speeds up the game by yards and yards.

It does away with all doubt in the minds of the public (and, above all, the mind of that unfortunate chap, the umpire) as to the lawful actions or otherwise of a player in endeavoring to rid himself of that terrible plague—the ball.

Mr H. L. Roberts, esteemed president of the Tigers and senior vice-president of the League, offers a suggestion to the Victorian League which I respectfully submit does little, if anything, to improve the situation. His suggestion still leaves a doubt (which the throwing rule clears away in a flash) in everybody's mind as to whether the player holds the ball two or 10 seconds.

Why the Victorian Football League do not fall into line with the lead given them by the Association is beyond my comprehension. When I say fall into line, I mean

TOOT McGILVRAY SAYS WESTERN AUSTRALIA EASILY WHIPPED VICTORIA IN TWO RETURN MATCHES IN PERTH ALSO.

How Victoria Beat Western

Seldom Forced to Play at Top Pressure

Wrong Conception on Vigor

By H. A. DE LACY

VICTORIA flattered West Australia for odd periods of their game at the Melbourne Cricket ground on Saturday, but never did the Westerners look winners.

Those who know the form of the Victorian players know also that they were never extended. There was always a man or two doing something at top pressure but never once did the full pressure go on as a team.

West, like South Australia, were lacking in many of the finer points of the game by comparison.

THE attendance was really good for an interstate game—30,000 paid £13?/11/7.

There is one misconception visiting teams have to rid themselves of. They think that the success of Victorian teams is their vigor. Victorians are certainly vigorous, but they never forget the ball in their vigor. The visiting teams bump hard, and often make it their first objective. The ball is momentarily forgotten.

The Victorians bump hard only to obtain possession of the ball.

The game is always moving. Victorian players may be skittled, but there comes along another to take the place of the fallen, and the ball goes on.

Style Helped Victorians

The Westerners were a rough bunch, in a fair and legitimate way, but as I watched them in action I felt that they were helping the hand of the Victorians to a nicety by the crude way they applied their vigor.

Further, they were never quite definite enough in their concentration on the ball. Always there was a weather eye cocked to see where the opposition was offering an interchange of bumps.

That is fatal against a fast-moving big team. As a consequence the Victorians were forced to play only in patches.

There was a short period when the Westerners built up their hopes by taking the lead. Then for half a quarter the force of the Victorians was felt. They rattled the Westerners with their spirited and dashing football.

Fresh blood was thrown into the ruck, the rovers became busybodies, and the mids maintained a definite supremacy. Dyer & Graham, or Morrison or Ware, big ruck men, were hanging loose and unguarded around the centre.

The drive that Cronin had been giving the West from the centre was chopped off. Crisp, the Victorian centre, was everywhere and the attack, either through Collins, or the rovers, or through Kyne at centre half-forward, to Todd was unbroken. The Victorian total soared.

The Western half-backs were beaten all day by the versatility of the Victorian half-forwards. Truth was they were rattled by the failure of their own ruck men and rovers to keep up with the Victorian pack. The Victorian rucks and rovers came down the field together, the half-forwards spread out like a fan, and the three Western half-backs found themselves between land and sky with six fast-moving men running foot loose, and not one half-back in the right position to check them.

Todd Unbeatable

There seemed to be nobody in the West defence who had the slightest idea of how to handle Todd, the centre forward. Nobody thought of running him under the ball, or of checking his marking by crowding him. They had the one idea—punch the ball away. The Victorians soon checked this practice by stabbing the ball low, giving Todd long leads, which he never failed to gather.

Cronin stood out among the Westralians. He is a centre man with every asset and would more than hold his own in Victoria.

However, he would need to make some adjustment in his tendency to play the centre in wide sweeping arcs. In a packed game—and there are far too many packed games in Victorian League — Cronin would be fighting to free himself from the pack. He would have to change his sweeping game to one of quick possession and quick disposal.

There was no Westerner who understood the art of marking as we do here. In a straight fly for the ball they were perhaps the equal of the Victorians, but when it came to manoeuvring and a side-on leap for the ball, or any of the dozen ways of taking an awkward mark, they are lost.

Tetley showed a fine sense of defence. Repeatedly he chipped in to clear the ball cleverly. Crow, the full-back, was overshadowed by Todd. Murray, Starr and Kingsbury, the half-backs, had their moments, but generally they were left to chase behind flying opponents.

Position Sense Weak

The centres did as well as anybody with Cronin their star. The forwards had many opportunities but their kicking and position sense was wretched. Doig seemed the more likely man to be sent to full-forward. His ground play might have offset the brilliant marking of Park, the Victorian full-back.

Opposed to the Victorian pocket backs Doig was met by men more his equal on the ground. Gook relied on his marking rather than his ground play at centre forward and Park had his measure.

The forwards did many foolish things playing to the wings after they had the ball centred and a kick at goal was the correct procedure.

Hooper did many fine things as rover but in the main both rovers and the followers were over matched.

Ron Todd with a delightful display of marking was the best man on the ground. He led the Western defence a merry dance. The Victorians as a whole did no more than they were asked to do. In the circumstances there is little need to differentiate between them. Each in turn had a period of dominance.

The scores and goal-kickers were:—

	Goals	Bhds.	Pts.
VICTORIA	22	13	145
WEST AUSTRALIA	17	21	123

Goal-kickers

Victoria.—Todd (8), Kyne (5), Fothergill (3), Beames (3), Collins, Dyer, Ware.
Western Australia.—Gook (6), Doig (5), Hooper (3), Truscott (2), Oliphant.

Haydn Bunton, whose dashing play will be missed at Fitzroy, and is sure to be appreciated at Perth.

NOTE THIS FOOTBALL BOOK COMPILED BY TOOT McGILVRAY FOR GOLDEN-BOX THE LIFE STORY OF GORDON COVENTRY-IN THIS ISSUE - TMc

GOALMOUTH DUEL between Crane (Richmond) and Todd (Collingwood) in the main League match.

International Kicking —

Aust. Must Average 62 yds. With Place Kicks to Succeed

WHEN pow-wows are reopened on the subject of the international kicking contest with the California Universities next season, several mistakes in this year's contest should be avoided if the best results are to be obtained for the Australian game in the United States

TO win the contest the Australians will have to register more than 62 yards for their six kicks in the place kick section, which still has to be finalised. We are comfortable leaders in the drop kick and punt kick sections, which were decided at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday.

THE delay in deciding the Australian end of the contest has allowed the American end to cool off. The Californians kicked three months ago. The Australians have not decided their section yet.

At the M.C.G. on Saturday the punt and drop-kick sections were finalised. The place-kicking and throwing divisions have to be recorded.

The arrangements of the League at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday left little to be desired. They are keen to develop the relationship between the two countries. Their difficulty is to set aside sufficient time to give the contest its just merit.

From one point of view, the staging of the contest at a time when there were certainly not more than a few thousand people present was not good publicity.

The Californians made an occasion of their kicking, the Victorians were forced to sandwich it in.

They started the contest at 1.30 and in an hour were able only to finalize the drop and punt kicks.

Better Conditions Early

Another drawback is the lateness of the Victorian kicking. Staged in the early months of the season better kicking conditions would be available. On Saturday the heavy atmosphere at the Melbourne ground was all against the kickers. Kicks that looked like making excellent figures died—dropped like a stone, to better 60 yards only by a yard or two.

This was particularly noticeable in the case of the South Australian, Ralph Green. I saw Green kick 74 yds. 2ft. 2in. in effortless style at Adelaide. At the Melbourne ground he started the same way, but finding that his first kick lacked flotation tried to force and did not get in a good kick. Had the kicking been held earlier in the season not only would the flotation have been better in the lighter air, but it would have synchronised with the American events.

The best kick was Frank Anderson's (Carlton) 68 yards with a punt with the Australian ball. The best drop with the Australian ball was George Bennett's (Footscray), 67½ yards. Bennett kicked 66½ yds. with a punt. M. Cronin registered the best kick with the American ball—67½ yds. with a punt.

Ralph Green could not better 65 yards. Bill Paulman's (Stanford) place kick of 79 yds. 1ft. 11in. with the Australian ball and his 75 yds. 2ft. 1in. with the American ball have yet to be beaten.

The kicks were made under the supervision of officials of the Victorian Football League, and were measured by a surveyor. On the ground were Messrs. R. H. Rush (president Australian National Football Council), Roy Alderman and Tony Kenny (S.A.) and Bruce Pye (Queensland).

Teams' Contest

Now the contest has been inaugurated, improvements at both ends can be made. Something more than a talking point has been arrived at.

In the sections decided, the Australian kickers have defeated the Stanford students, who were winners at the American end of the contest.

The contest is a team contest with Australian and American footballs between four Californian Universities—the University of California (Los Angeles), the University of California (Berkeley), the University of Southern California, and the Stanford University; and the Victorian Football League. The League, however, very rightly widened the Australian end of the contest by inviting players from South Australia and Western Australia to kick. The personnel at this end, therefore, became all-Australian.

Australia In Lead

Three kickers constitute a team and their total yardage, rather than their individual performance, counts.

The Australians have a clear margin in both punt and drop kick sections, but the contest cannot be decided until the place kick section is finalised.

In the drop kick section Australia lead 385 yards to 341.0.9½, and in the punt section by 384.2 to 363.0.8¾. The grand totals are, therefore: Australia 769.2.0; Stanford, 704.0.10¼.

Stanford, however, have a team total of 438.2.9 in the place kick, giving them a grand aggregate of 1143.0.7¼.

This means that the Australians with their six place kicks (three with each ball) will have to produce 373.1¼—an average of over 62 yards per kick to equal. With place-kicking out of favor in the League, the Australians might find it difficult to beat this mark.

A comparison of the team totals shows:

Punt Kick Section

AUSTRALIA—

	Aust. Ball	Amer. Ball
F. Anderson (Carlton) ..	68	55
R. Todd (C'wood)	66	62
G. Bennett (F'scray)	67.2	55

Team Total, 384.2 yards.

STANFORD—

	Aust. Ball	Amer. Ball
Pete Fay	57.0.7	65.1.8¾
Jim Groves	59.0.2	61.1.4
Bill Paulman	53.2.0	66.0.3

Team Total, 363.0.0¾.

Drop Kick Section

AUSTRALIA—

	Aust. Ball	Amer. Ball
Geo. Bennett (F'scray) ..	67.1.6	61
D. Rayment (St. Kilda) ..	66	60
P. Lockyer (West Aus.) ..	65.1.6	63

Team total, 385 yards.

STANFORD—

	Aust. Ball	Amer. Ball
Bill Paulman	64.2.0	60.1.5½
Jim Groves	52.1.7	58.2.11
Pete Fay	50.1.9	54.0.1

Team total, 341.0.9½.

ALSO THE 5th AUSTRALIA

Saturday, June 1932

terners

Victorians Gave South Australians Football Lesson

By H. A. de Lacy

South Australian football officials one and all acknowledged that the Victorians gave them a football lesson at the Adelaide oval on Saturday.

The Victorian team gave a classic exhibition of team work and support. They have proved a credit to their State both on and off the field.

THERE is no doubting the sincerity with which the South Australians approach these interstate matches. They were keyed up to beat the Victorians. The team had been trained together for weeks. They had thought about the problem of Victoria's reputed vigorous methods, and had selected a team believed to be strong, big and pacy.

It proved to be one of the worst eighteens they have selected for the simple reason that, if they had vigor, they did not know how to use it. The Victorians made it look worse with a classic display of football.

The South Australians threw themselves at the Victorians, only to find themselves side-stepped, or that a glancing blow had allowed the Victorian, at the receiving end, to spin off the hip and play on as if nothing had happened.

Umpiring Bad

Surely no Victorian team has ever experienced such umpiring. Umpire Raven's decisions went beyond the bounds of a difference of interpretation of rules, he refused to protect the Victorians.

Consequently they were flagrantly pushed, slung and even tripped. Often the South Australians departed with a Victorian head in one hand and the ball in the other, with umpire Raven completely indifferent to the happening.

If these games are to be taken seriously, as they should be, Saturday's umpiring must be regarded as a close British tennis court not be restrained in such circumstances.

In fact, debarred from legitimate stopping in the second quarter with the scores close, the Victorians used their hips and shoulders, bowling over one or two opponents in vigorous but perfectly fair fashion. That set the crowd roaring. It could well have gone further, but the South Australians were a little too easy to make it necessary.

The manner in which the Victorians combined was amazing. We had thought that there would be spare parts in the eighteen, yet there was not a Victorian who turned in a bad team game.

South Australians were given a lesson in many things. Firstly, their passing was excellent, but they passed always to a man direct. The result was that the Victorians concentrated on spolling and in combination broke down attacks before they had properly developed.

By contrast, the Victorians shot the ball to a vacant spot on the field and the forwards raced into position to take the pass and to draw the defence.

Shepherding is a lost art with South Australians. The Victorians hunted in pairs, one man attending to the opposition while his team-mate raced the ball forward.

Another thing the Victorian know how and when to take risks, the South Australians do not. They flung themselves into crushes fearlessly, but too recklessly to produce good football.

South Australians have an old-fashioned sense of "take the mark, go back and have a long kick." The Victorians played-on, kept moving and scouting, passing the ball on without the slightest delay.

Opposition Disorganised

The Victorians were consequently disorganising the opposition. The Souths were always facing a packed field of defenders.

Several South Australians, particularly Mueller and A. Smith, were brilliant in the air. They take the old-fashioned fly from behind, reminiscent of Dick Lee, the crack Collingwood forward, in his heyday.

However, early in the game there was developed the counter of a Victorian player wandering across the take-off with negative results to the high-flyers.

To the observant and the football student, it was a lesson in the fine points of the game and a good lesson at that.

Good For Juniors

THE secretary of the South Australian Football League (Mr Tom Hill) was delighted despite his disappointment at the South Australian defeat.

"There were thousands of junior footballers at the oval," he said after the game," and the Victorians have shown them a style of football and team combination that will do them good.

"We wanted to win. We always are keen to gauge our standards by those of Victoria, but in this defeat we have had considerable profit — we have been given a demonstration of classic football."

'Could Buy League Out'

—Liston

ASSOCIATION WILL FIGHT TO THE END

By H. A. de LACY

"IF the League want to take the risk of litigation with the Association over the poaching of players—well, the courts are wide open to them. The Association will not shirk the issue. I guarantee that. I have only this to say to the League — let them treat it as a threat or a promise — we are ready waiting for them, ready to fight the issue from court to court."

In these fighting words Mr. J. J. Liston, president of the Victorian Football Association, summed up the position of his clubs being threatened with injunctions against their poaching League stars.

"LEAGUE club officials are spreading it round that my clubs haven't the money to honor their agreements with League players who cross over," said Mr. Liston. "What a piece of infernal impudence. Why the majority of the League clubs are 'broke to the wide' themselves. They are writing in grandstands as assets to balance their books. Without their social committees they could not carry on a week.

"Well here's a challenge for them to think about. The biggest obstacle to graded football in Victoria is the registration of the 12 League clubs as a company. That's not insurmountable.

We'll Pay Them Cash

"What do the assets of the League amount to—Harrison House, about £15,000?

"All right, the Association will buy a half interest in their assets. I'll get the money. That is what WE think of the League as a powerful financial magnet.

"In return we want equal rights in football, with a graded competition from among the two bodies. We want promotion and relegations. WE WANT FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION THROUGHOUT THIS STATE PUT ON A BASIS OF SOUND PROGRESS. We want independent control of football for Victoria.

"If the League think they can scare us or stop my clubs from taking any League star they want by threat of litigation they're crazy. We know that any litigation would not go beyond the first court it was taken to. It would be thrown out there.

"The League haven't a leg to stand on with their registration contract. We are in the same boat as they are, for we use the same form of contract. We therefore know our ground only too well.

League Started Poaching

"For years the League have been the greatest player poachers in Australia. They have wrecked teams in this State and interstate. They are still after Association players; have them training on their grounds.

"Can't they take it? Western Australia, South Australia and our fellows have had to take it from them for years. Now we are getting a bit of our own back and 'lo hear the gentle lark.'

"We do not want to drag football into the courts. That will do the game no good. We are, however, going to fight to the bitter end.

"Knowing the determination of my clubs, knowing also that such a fight will throw football management into the melting pot, I say to the League here and now if you want peace, well, we are ready to compensate you with hard cash for any sacrifices you can prove you have had to make in giving us what we want. If you prefer strife, well be it on your head. We are just as willing to meet you in a scrap.

"There is this to it, however. We're done with the pretty promises of the League. The League, or their clubs, soon find a way round the type of promises they give. If they want to talk turkey all right, if not, well—I give you my word the Association are ready for them either way."

Which to put it mildly is throwing the gauntlet in the teeth of the League.

MR. J. J. LISTON, Chairman of the Victorian Football Association.

CHAOS FOLLOWS RAIDS ON VIC. FOOTBALL STARS

By H. A. de LACY

VICTORIAN football circles have been thrown into chaos by a series of spectacular raids on League stars by Association clubs.

THE initial sortie was a sensation. Laurie Nash, South Melbourne champion, signed a contract to play with Camberwell this season, without as much as a by-your-leave to South.

The first shot in an extending football war has been fired.

Today there are League stars sitting on every Association club's doorstep. Before their season starts on Easter Saturday it is certain that every Association eighteen will include at least one or two League big shots. There is no telling where it will end, for the League seems powerless to stop the drift. The Association, for years the under dog, means business.

Interstate football followers who have always regarded the Victorian Football League as tantamount to the controlling body in the state and who have heard little or nothing about the Association, will find it hard to realise, that not only the prestige of the League is threatened, but their very existence is being undermined.

The Association have, by good luck or good management, put the League on the spot.

Throwing Caused Break

For years, the League, the stronger body, have enjoyed a reciprocal agreement with the Association. In playing strength the Association represents the outer, newer and more progressive suburbs of Melbourne's metropolis.

The relationships between the two broke down immediately the Association decided to introduce the old boundary law, throwing the ball (both hands to be employed and the hands not to be lifted above the shoulder line), and a rule controlling charging after a player has delivered the ball.

The League, bound as it is by the rules of the Australian National Football Council, could have no agreement with a body playing rules outside the council code.

War between the two bodies meant a free-for-all in raiding players. League clubs were soon busy and Association stars were seen training at League grounds. Up to this stage all went merry as a wedding bell with the League. Then the bolt fell.

Camberwell swooped down and Nash was signed up under contract to play with Camberwell. He was found employment in the council at Camberwell as a clerk at approximately £200 a year. For his football services he will be paid another £6 a week.

3000 See Nash Train

When he appeared in his first practice match 3000 fans were waiting for him. Camberwell sold out in membership tickets. They had a veritable bean-feast. At other Association grounds record crowds saw the training.

Immediately the League sought legal advice. They have a form of registration in Victoria which in effect binds a player from playing with any club outside the League (or alternatively the Association) for a period of two years. Every League and Association player signs this permit at the commencement of a season.

Talk of litigation failed to shake the Association clubs. Rumor was busy everywhere. Harry Vallence, Carlton's centre forward, who was selected to play for Victoria in Adelaide last season, was said to have crossed to Williamstown.

Albie Morrison, crack Footscray follower, was said to be at Yarraville. W. Smallhorn, one of Fitzroy's three Brownlow Medallists, was said to be negotiating with Brunswick. Jack Collins, Geelong crack, was said to be at Prahran. The League club officials were almost in a frenzy as rumor was succeeded by fresh rumor.

Fortunately for the League, these men turned out for their clubs as usual in practice games. So rumor was fickle in these instances.

(Continued in Page 3)

SIR REGENT'S CHANCE IS SLIPPING

Nothing is to be gained by making excuses for Sir Regent's defeat in the Rosehill Autumn Handicap on Saturday.

Mestoravon was too good for him and will beat him again, if they meet in the Sydney Cup.

TRAINER Jim Abbs is not down in the dumps over Sir Regent's defeat. "He'll be a different proposition at Randwick on Cup Day," he said.

Sir Regent had the run of the race. He can be improved a little, but not to any great extent. He will be given another trial in the Warwick Farm Cup next Saturday.

Mestoravon's near foreleg a troubling him. It is to be hoped that he will be able to take his place in the field, for no stayer seems more suited to win his second cup than the plain looking Polymestor gelding. His trainer, Ray Cashman, will give him plenty of swimming exercise in Newcastle harbor in the hope of getting him to the post.

Mestoravon has been in work since November, and has it on most of his opponents on the score of condition. He is still as plain looking as ever, and could easily be taken for a jumper, but when he won the Sydney Cup last year he was a lot lighter.

NOTES ON HADYN BUNTON AND THE TALL WIND WHO BLEW IN FROM TEXAS — A SCENE FROM THE AMERICAN GAID IRON FILM HERO FOR A DAY

Maroons And 'Dons Won't Miss Stars

By H. A. de LACY

Will the football season look quite the same—
FITZROY WITHOUT HAYDN BUNTON
and
ESSENDON WITHOUT KEITH FORBES?
The football public have for seasons past thought of Bunton first and Fitzroy afterwards; or, of the fairheaded Forbes as the guiding star in Essendon's fortunes. Well might we ask will it be the same?

WONDERING about it, I directed questions to responsible parties in the clubs. This is what they said:—

"We've Lost Our 1937 Team"—Rattray

I caught Gordon Rattray, the Fitzroy coach, towelling vigorously after his shower.

"The Maroons without Haydn!" said Gordon. "I know what you are going to tell me. We've lost half the team. Well I am telling you something. We haven't lost half the team. We've lost the whole team, that is by 1937 standards.

"Haydn was a team in himself. That's just the pity of it. He was a player and a half, but, like many another, he should, in my opinion, have been given the cane in his football infancy. He was a rolling stone. He loved to rove four quarters. As far as Haydn Bunton himself was concerned he did everything like a champion. But what about the other 17 men?

"I think that Bunton needed discipline on the field himself; he could never insist on other men keeping their places and playing a team game. Everyone emulated Haydn, and the result was a disjointed force in the true football sense.

"Further, the brilliance of Bunton and his happy knack of overshadowing everyone else made other players—not 13 stone. They are all fast and fit. These are not just cornstalks gone to seed. They are footballers from the top marcel to the heel callous.

"I am very proud of this bunch. It might interest fans to know that we are grooming a big fellow, 6ft. and some more, for the centre half-forward position. He is an excellent mark and kick, and if you're old enough in years you might think you are seeing ghosts. His father wore the maroon. He's Jim Toohey's youngster. No, he doesn't place kick that I know.

"Good luck to Bunton wherever he plays. He was a champion all right, but well—we must forget about him. We've got other things to do."

Two Teams With Two Thoughts

The story was different at Essendon. A leading official—modesty forbids mention of his name—put the case straight to me.

"So long as we had Keith Forbes and Jack Baggott we had two distinct thoughts in the team," he said. "You know what that can mean. It does not suggest that either was necessarily in the wrong. They just didn't click. The result—half the team was this way, half that.

"No team can play in that mood. We know that certain players would not pass the ball to certain others. Things might have become desperate last season, but—well circumstance gave the committee a chance of settling the variance of viewpoints without further widening the breach by taking sides.

"We cleared Forbes to North Melbourne with all good wishes, and we know that he will be a success. We hope he will, though we recognise that he might be a thorn in our flesh when we meet North. He's a great player is Forbes.

"We are a united family. The players and committee have every confidence in Jack Baggott as coach. We never doubted his ability. We were just caught in a jam between the two schools of thought. We are all happy and sailing on.

"Last year we were badly beaten in three games only. The other matches we lost we should have won. We know why we lost—just this, and that, or something else. However we feel confident that all is well with the Same

"There's a laugh and a cheeriness about the training room that sounds good to me. Our recruits are excellent, our team well balanced.

"We hope to get Fay back from Brunswick after he has played in those opening matches with Brunswick. Look at our first ruck—Len Webster, Hugh Torney, and Dick Reynolds. That's a premiership combination if you like."

Perhaps the departure of Keith Forbes has solved a problem for Essendon.

The sun shines. It's a great world. Fitzroy wish Bunton luck. Essendon wish Forbes the same.

There's a laugh and a cheeriness about the Essendon training room.

AND FOOTBALL IS HERE AGAIN.

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HERO FOR A DAY

A Poser By Blackburn

"UMPIRE BLACKBURN set his usual weekly puzzle on football rules," says Rod McGregor, regarding a decision in the Richmond-Collingwood game.

"In the last quarter a Richmond player was pushed in the back by Harry Collier. His kick went forward as he fell awkwardly. To the amazement of all, Umpire Blackburn gave the free kick to Collier. It was a bad decision and one that jolly near cost Richmond the game. Week after week, Blackburn sets his little problem."

The "C" squadron team which played in the first football match organised by the A.I.F. in Palestine. Back row: A. Moyle (S.A.), R. Mole (S.A.), R. Parker (W.A.), T. Limb (W.A.), P. Mannering (Tas.), F. Rigney (Tas.) and S. Foot (S.A.) Kneeling: S. Kearnes (Tas.), G. Timms (W.A.), and L. Walton (N.S.W.). Sitting: B. Knight (S.A.), W. Brown (W.A.), J. Roberts (S.A.), K. Langham (Tas.), B. Ind (S.A.), S. Forrester (S.A.), B. Martin (S.A.) and L. Oswald (Vic.).

JACK GRANT
GEELONG FOOTBALLER
Winner of the 1938 **Stawell Gift**
IN DRAMATIC STYLE

Some of the players watching events during three-quarter time.

"RITCHIE" THOMAS, East Perth's best player.

Champions of the Past

Some of those who attended at Subiaco Oval on July 17 when a match was played between two teams picked from ex-carnival players as part of a footballers' war funds carnival.

Larry Duffy (left) and J. Leonard renew acquaintance. Both were winners of the Sandover Medal and their roving combination will never be forgotten.

Left: Jim Craig being introduced to the crowd by the secretary of the Western Australian National Football League (Mr. W. Orr). Craig was a Sandover Medallist and a Carnival player.

Right: "Nipper" Truscott, who was captain of one of the teams and the oldest player to take part in the match, coming out of the dressing rooms. He is considered to have been one of the greatest centre men the game here has known and represented this State in five carnivals.

A group of past champions who took part in the carnival. Back row (left to right): L. Duffy, H. Harrold, A. Johnson, J. Gosnell, A. Western, A. S. Hewby, J. Craig, E. Flemming, A. Shepherd S. Daily, C. J. Sunderland, E. Marinko, J. Dolan, A. Green, F. Hopkins, H. Limb, R. Edgar, W. ("Digger") Thomas, T. Outridge, W. J. Truscott, W. Brophy, G. White, G. Owens and F. Wimbridge. Centre: J. McDiarmid, H. Sherlock, R. Lucas, V. Sparrow, E. F. Allen, A. Watts, G. Bee, A. Howson, D. Coffey and K. Hough. Front: W. McGarry, J. Leonard, J. Guhl, R. H. Brentnall, W. C. Thomas, H. Grigg, E. A. Lovegrove, D. Woods, W. A. Evans, W. James and C. Jennings.

"Bub" Jarvis (right) and Paddy Hebbard racing for the ball. Hebbard was one of the State's most renowned captains and centre half-forwards and Jarvis was considered to be the best centre half-back in Australia.

E. Travers winning the footballers' half-mile championship (League players excluded) from P. Wenn (on the ground) and M. O'Loughlin.